

A  
TOUCHSTONE  
OF GRACE.

Discovering the differences  
betweene true and  
*counterfeit Grace :*

Laying downe infallible E-  
vidences and markes of  
*true Grace :*

Serving for the triall of a mans  
*spirituall estate.*

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By *A. H. C.*  
Bachelor in Divinitie and Mini-  
ster of Gods Word at *Chran-*  
*ham in Essex.*

The third Edition corrected.

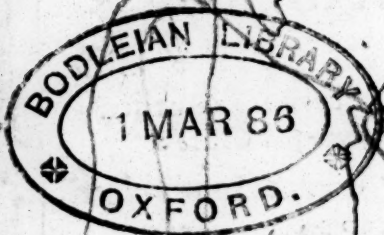
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2 Pet. 1. 10.

*Wherefore, the rather, brethren  
give diligence to make your call-  
ing and election sure : for if yee  
doe these things, yee shall never  
fall.*

*1419.9.76*  
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TO  
The VVorshipful  
GEORGE PITT of  
*Harrow on the Hill,*  
*Esquire,*  
*And*

To M<sup>rs</sup>. MARY PITT  
his wellaffected Wife;  
Grace be multiplied.

**R**ight Worthy, and my  
much respected friends:  
when these my poore labours  
went first abroad, you were  
then but partners, and sharers  
in them; they being dedicated  
unto the people of my cure and  
charge, of which you were the  
chiefe. But sceing that time  
hath so quickly brought

## The Epistle.

another impression, I am bold  
to intitle you wholly unto it  
which thing I hope I may doe,  
without any colour of incon-  
stancy in me (the worke not be-  
ing now altogether the same it  
was) or shadow of injury unto  
my people, they being willing  
in this particular to resigne up  
their right unto you, as to those  
from whom they have formerly  
received so much friendship  
and kindnesse as they can no  
way make you a valuable re-  
quitall. For what office of love  
could there bee either publik,  
or private wherein you were  
wanting to them? your chari-  
ty and bounty hath so aboun-  
ded amongst us, that, as wee  
had great cause to blesse God  
for your presence with us, so  
wee as much cause to la-  
ment

## Dedicatory.

ment your absence from us. Accept therefore (I desire you) of these my labours as a pledge and testimony both of my unfained love, and respective thankfulnesse, for that your constant and continued kindnesse to mee and mine, which you have evidenced in many particulars, ever since your first comming among us. For which kindnesse of yours, I shall ever continue an unfained, and hearty well-wisher of your chiefeft good, even the salvation of your soules; whereof I must hold my selfe bound to have a care, although (to my no little grieve) the Lord hath now removed you from mee: Howsoever we are separated in regard of cohabitation, yet shall I daily be neere you in my best

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*affections, and heartily rejoyce  
to heare of your good procee-  
dings, going on in that profes-  
sion which you made amongst  
us, and building still upon that  
foundation which (I hope) was  
layed with us. For which grace  
to be bestowed upon you, I shall  
bee,*

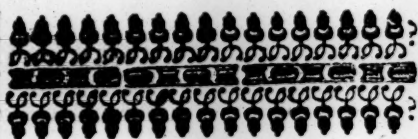
Cranham, Octob. 3.  
MDCxxxI.

Your Remembrance  
at the Throne of  
Grace,

*A Hartsuet.*

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T O  
**THE GODLY**  
*and well-affected*  
 READER.

**G**Entle Reader, I have  
 here presented unto  
 thy view, the sum and sub-  
 stance of divers Sermons,  
 which I preached unto mine  
 owne Charge, and some ad-  
 joyning neighbours: who re-  
 ceiving (as they professed)  
 much good by my La-  
 bours, were earnest with me  
 either to bestow upon them  
 some of my notes, or else to  
 publish in Print, that which

*To the godly Reader.*

I had delivered in word.  
Whose requests I could not  
well with-stand, being ur-  
ged by some, that my cal-  
ling makes mee a common  
servant for any good I may in  
publike, as well as in pri-  
vate. And I was rather in-  
duced unto this taske in a  
double respect: First, be-  
cause amongst the heap of  
bookes that are printed, two  
few strike downe-right at  
sinne, or lend a hand to helpe  
forward the worke of Grace.  
Secondly, because the ini-  
quity of the time is such, that  
with too many (who follow  
the fashions of the World)  
grace is out of fashion, and  
of all other things the least  
regarded, or looked after;  
although (as I shall make it  
plaine)

*To the godly Reader.*

plaine) it bee the onely thing  
to bee desired, as that which  
sanctifies and well-seasons e-  
very condition heere, and  
makes way for happinesse  
hereafter: for the want of  
Grace cuts off all hope of fu-  
ture glory, and precipitates  
people into endlesse woe  
and misery. Nature by its  
strength may in time worke  
out, or weare out many bo-  
dily maladies, without the  
advice of the Physician, or  
any helpe of physicke: but  
the soule, so deadly sinne-  
ficke as it is, can never bee  
helped and healed, with-  
out the Balsam of grace;  
which alone is able in time  
to worke out those malign-  
ant humors, which the  
soule hath contracted unto

*To the godly Reader.*

it selfe. A rare thing it is to finde that man or woman which will not easily be perswaded, for the preventing or curing some deadly disease, to take (though otherwise loathing physicke) such things as shall be prescribed them for their good: for Nature seeks to preserve it selfe. Hence it is that the Toad (upon distemper) runnes to the Plantain, the Hart to the Dittany, and the Dog to the grasse. Therefore, unlessse wee will shew our selves to have lesse understanding than the unreasonable creatures, we must looke out for Grace, the only cure of our distempered and diseased soules.

Reade then, I beseech thee, this small Treatise with the same



*To the godly Reader.*

same affection, and heart,  
in which it was complied for  
thee; and that is (God  
knowes) an earnest desire of  
bettering thy spirituall e-  
state, and helping forward  
thy salvation: that the world-  
ly wise-man may grow more  
wise for his soule; that the  
ungodly may labour for  
grace; that the hypocrite  
may be more sincere and up-  
right; and that the gracious  
heart may grow in grace, and  
with more comfort hold it  
out unto the end. If upon the  
first taste thou findest but  
little or no sweetnesse here-  
in, let mee intreat thee to as-  
say the second time; one bit  
may draw downe another. It  
is a rare feast where every  
guest likes, and loves all the  
provision

*To the godly Reader.*

provision that is made; yet  
hee is an unworthy guest  
which will feed of no dish,  
or bee offended with his  
friend which invited him,  
because some one or two  
dishes bee prepared which  
hee likes not. Reade, taste,  
and Consider. If thou receive  
any good by these my La-  
bours, give God the praise,  
and pray for me

*Thy servant in the  
Lords workes*

*A. H.*



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1 Spiri-

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Grace will helpe us against corruptions.

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A  
TOUCHSTONE  
OF GRACE.

Hebr. 13. 25.

*Grace be with you all.*

**I**T is not my purpose to spend many words about the Author, or authority of this Epistle, which are questioned by some, and controverted by others, lest I should seeme to trifle out the time with matter of no great importance.

Al-

Although the Author cannot speake for himselfe to claime his right, or to vindicate that wrong which hee hath sustained; yet the matter of the Epistles speakes sufficiently for its Author and authority. Why should any question the Author, when it beares Saint *Pauls* Ensigne, and marke, though not his name? Great wisdom there was in concealing of his name; the want whereof is no sound argument to prove it was not *Pauls*, for then (by the same reason) wee may say, that it had no Author, because it hath no Owner, no name put unto it. And as for its authoritie, mee thinkes it should be  
out

out of question, the matter thereof being so heavenly, so lively setting out the offices of Christ, so soundly proving him to bee the promised *Messias*, the only Prophet, and Archbishop of his Church.

The words which I have read unto you, are the ordinary salutation, and farewell which Saint *Paul* useth in all other his General Epistles, the sence and meaning whereof I will give you in a few words.

Grace in Scripture hath well-nigh twentie severall acceptations: I will acquaint you with some of the principall.

Sometimes it is taken for  
the

Grace how  
taken in  
Scripture.

the free , and undeserved love , and favour of God electing , and calling of us , *2 Tim. 1. 9. Hee hath saved us , and called us with an holy calling , not according to our workes , but according to his purpose and grace.*

Sometimes it is taken for the imputation of Christ his righteousness , *Rom. 5. 17. Much more shall they which receive the abundance of grace , and of the gift of righteousness , &c.* Heere grace standeth in opposition unto the guilt of *Adams* sin , and so is taken for *Iustification*.

Sometimes grace is taken for the guidance , direction , and operation of Gods Spirit in us , as *Rom. 6. 14.*

*Sinne*

Sinne shall not have dominion over you, for yee are not under the Law, but under Grace, where it may bee taken for Sanctification.

Sometimes Grace is taken for the blessed estate of Gods children after they bee justified, and sanctified, Rom. 5. 2. By whom we have accessse through Faith unto this grace wherein we stand.

Sometimes grace is taken for the practice of piety, 2 Pet. 3. 18. Grow in Grace.

And sometimes it is taken for glory, the perfection of grace 1 Pet. 1. 13. Hope to the end, for the grace that is to bee brought unto you at the revelation of I E S V S CHRIST.

Here

Here grace cannot well be understood of any thing else but glory. And glory may very well be termed grace in two respects:

1

First, because it comes through grace, *Ephes. 2. 8.*

2

And secondly, because by grace wee come to have some assurance of glory, *2 Thess. 2. 16. Who hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.*

But grace in this place is taken for the free love and favour of God to man-wards, together with all those benefits spirituall and eternall, which doe flow from thence; as *Adoption, Regeneration, Remission of sinnes,*

*sinnes, Iustification and Sanctification ; all which doe properly come under this terme Grace.*

From whence wee may lay this foundation, upon which wee intend (God assisting ) to build our ensuing discourse, to wit, that (seeing *Paul* wisht grace unto the *Hebrewes*, and all others unto whom hee wrote, above, and before all other things ) *The chiefest good which wee can wish one to another, or can receive and be made partakers of, is Grace.* No doubt, if any thing could have beene more beneficiall, or necessarie unto the *Hebrewes*, he would have wished it unto them: but seeing he begins  
B and

*Doctr.*  
Grace is  
the chiefest  
good.

and ends this, and other his Epistle with this prayer, *Grace be with you:* wee may safely conclude, that *Paul* esteemed *Grace* to bee the best good which hee could wish them, or they partake of.

Long and large disputes have beene amongst Naturalists concerning the chiefe good; severall verdicts, and judgements have beene given of it; some calling pleasures, some esteeming profits, and some accounting honours the chiefe good; some this thing, and other- some that, as their severall humors and affections have swayed them: but we have not so learned *Christ*, and therefore ( from a better prin-



principle ) beyond the reach or pitch of all Naturalists, wee conclude, that the prime good, the best thing we can partake of, is Grace: for I may truely say of it, as *David* speakes of *Goliaths* sword, *1 Sam. 21. 9. None to that.* All earthly comforts, yea the greatest preferments, the largest possessions, the most excellent endowments either of body or minde, in respect of Grace, are but as dung and drosse. The excellencie of Grace will appeare the better, if wee acquaint our selves with the truth and worth thereof: which that we may the better doe observe wee these particulars:

*Difference betwixt true.*

1

First of all, I will lay downe the differences betwixt true and counterfeit Grace.

2

Secondly, I will give you some evidences and marks of true Grace.

3

Thirdly, I will shew the reasons of the doctrine.

4

And then in the fourth and last place, I will come to make some profitable use and application of the point.

---

*Differences betwixt true and counterfeit Grace.*

**F**irst, of the differences betwixt true and false sound & counterfeit grace. A necessary search, and a point

point wherein wee have all need to be skillfull, because of the deepe imposture, and deceitfulnesse of our owne wicked wretched hearts, which (like unto lying spirits) will flatter; and deceive us, telling us that we are in a good way, and that all is well with us, when as it is worse than nought; and therefore we should be the more willing to heare of it. For a man may have a gracelesse & wicked hart, and yet not know it, nor beleeeve it; and we are beguiled in nothing so much in nothing so soone, as about our spirituall estate, the estate of grace; pleasing our selves with shewes and shadowes, instead of mat-

ter and substance. Besides, the Devill is subtile, and he will not bee wanting to teach us the art of hypocrisie: and hence it is that vertues are oft taken up by vicious persons; and fiends of darkenesse will for their owne ends sometimes appeare like Angels of light. How much then doth it stand us upon how neerely doth it cōcerne us, to search and try whether our coine be currant, or counterfeit? lest that, as for the present wee beguile others, in the end wee deceive our owne soules.

The differences twixt true and counterfeit grace, lye especially in foure things:

First,

First, the ground or beginning of Grace.

1

Secondly, the growth, or proceeding of it.

2

Thirdly, the declension or falling thereof.

3

Fourthly, and lastly, the rising and perseverance thereof.

4

First, of the ground and beginning of grace. Know we that all grace commeth from God the fountaine of grace: *Every good giving, and every perfect gift is from above, and commeth downe from the Father of lights.*

*Iam. 1. 17.*

Grace commeth from grace: for there is grace infusing, and grace infused. Now that you may the better distinguish the one from the other: before I

Grace defined.

The definition explained.

fall upon the differences , give mee leave to acquaint you with the nature of that grace , from whence all grace is derived unto us. *Peter Martyr* doth thus define the grace of God: *Grace is the free good will of God to man* , whereby hee accepteth of us in *Christ*, forgives us our sinnes , gives us his Spirit here , and eternall life hereafter.

First, it is called the free Good will of God , utterly to exclude all merit on our part. Hence it is that the Scripture in divers places doth diametrically oppose grace and merit : as *Rom. 11. 6.* *If it bee of grace, it is no more of works, or else were grace no more grace.* For  
grace

grace is all grace , or no grace. So *Ephes. 2. 8, 9.* By grace yee are saved, it is the gift of God, not of works, &c.

Light is not more contrary unto darknesse , good stands not in more opposition unto evill , than grace and merit doe oppose each other. Merit in the best sense , in the least sense , doth marre the sense of grace. Yea , grace excludes that prevision of our workes , which some imagine to bee the ground of Gods loving us ; or if not the ground a maine motive , and great meanes of Gods bestowing his grace upon us. But the nature of grace will not admit of any such prevision, and foreseeing

Ezek. 16. 6.

seeing of our workes. The ground of all grace is in God himselfe; and therefore grace must needs bee free, it being his meere good will; and owne goodnesse to respect us. As hee told the people of Israel, *Deut. 7. 8.* Nothing without God moveth him, or can any wayes allure him to bestow his grace upon us. Hee found us in our bloud, unlovely, lothsome, unworthy to bee beloved: wherefore wee conclude, that grace is Gods free good will.

The Church of *Rome* hath beene much puzzled about this doctrine of Gods free grace, and therefore in generall tearmes they will seeme



seeme to joyne issue with us, as if they said not, as if they held not any other thing than that the Apostle alleageth, Rom. 3. 24.

*That wee are justified freely by his grace*; but like the Divell their father, they speake the truth in a false manner; their words have a wicked meaning, which overthrowes the nature of Grace, and the very foundation of Christian religion: For by *Iustification* they doe not understand the free grace of God in himselfe, and that righteousness of Christ, freely imputed unto us, but such a righteousness, as God freely works in us: So by grace, they doe not understand the free  
and

Rom. 3. 24.

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ma.

and undeserved love & favour of God to man, but certaine gifts of grace, certaine, habituall graces, as faith, love, mercy, &c. which God freely workes in us, and for which (say they) he doth accept of us. Now what is this, but to overturne grace, to overthrow Iustification, and to make us our owne Saviours? When for certaine graces of our owne, and our owne inherent righteousnesse, God doth accept of us. From whence wee may boldly conclude: that the doctrine of the Church of Rome doth overthrow the foundation, it perverts the nature of grace, and takes away the truth of Iustification.

cation. For Iustification rightly considered, implies two things : First, an utter emptinesse and want in us : Secondly , an absolute fulnesse and sufficiencie in Christ. I would know how this can be, if any merit or worth be in us; if wee merit, there is something in us; if something in us, then not an utter emptines; neither is there an all-sufficiencie in Christ : thus they take away Iustification, they make Christ no absolute Saviour, and so no perfect Christ, and so no Christ at all. Let us therefore abominate the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that satanicall Synagogue; let us hold it to be

Eph. 1. 5, 6.

bee Antichristian, against Christ, and their doctrine to bee against the truth of grace, and (to say truth) a gracelesse doctrine. To put it out of all question that grace is the free gift of God, Saint *Paul* telleth us, *2 Tim.* 1. 9. that it was given unto us before the world was. True, say the Papists: but how? thorough Gods foreseeing our workes. But this the Apostle confutes in the same verse, telling us, *that it is not according to our workes, but according to his own purpose and grace.* Again, in *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. He telleth us, that *Hee predestinated us to bee adopted, through IESVS CHRIST unto himselfe.*

selfe, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the prayse of the glorie of his grace. Therefore, to conclude this point: know, that whatsoever good thing hath befallen us, or is comming towards us, (all favours and mercies exhibited, or promised) all are of Gods free grace, all according to the good pleasure of his will; the ground of all is within himselfe, as *Beza* well rendereth the words, *Ephes. 1. 5.* *ἐκ αὐτοῦ*, Teaching us that no cause present, or future, without God, moved God to bestow his grace upon us. For if God had not loved us before wee loved him, wee had never

1 Ioh. 4. 19.

Ez. 16. 6.

Ro. 5. 7, 8.

1 Cor. 15.  
10.

never beene beloved, 1 Ioh. 4. 19. If God had not loved us before we had been amiable, fit to be beloved, wee had never tasted of his love: for hee found us filthy in our bloud, Ez. 16. 6. If God had not loved us before wee had beene able to procure, or deserve his love, wee had never beene beloved, Rom. 5. 7. 8. If wee bee at any time able to doe God any service, it is not wee, but the grace of God in us, 1 Cor. 15. 10. Or, if at any time, wee bring any thing unto God, wee must say as David saith, 1 Chron. 29. 14. *All things, O Lord, come of thee, and of thine owne hands have wee given thee.* If God respect,  
or

or reward any service of ours, what doth hee but crowne his owne gifts?

The consideration whereof cries shame in our faces, for making the Lord so wretched a requitall for so free and undeserved grace. Our case was desperate, our condition damnable; nothing of our owne to bring us into grace, and favour with God: only his owne goodnesse moved him to take pittie upon us, and freely of his *grace to justifie us*, *Rom. 3. 24.* How should this knit our hearts unto the Lord? A benefit, the more freely it comes, the stronger it tyes the receiver unto the giver. The  
Sun

*Rom. 3. 24.*

Psal. 104.  
19.

Sun shines not more freely upon us (nay not so freely, for that can doe no other, it shines by vertue of an higher and commanding power, and that order which God hath set, *Psal. 104. 19.*) then Gods grace is bestowed upon us. How should this fill our hearts and tongues with the praises of the Lord? Had wee the tongues of men and Angels, wee could not sufficiently expresse his praises, for the freeness of his grace. How should this tye us unto the Lord, and knit our hearts unto him, who hath so abounded in love unto us, and that so freely, so undeservedly?

Againe, here is matter  
of



of comfort unto all dejected and drooping spirits, cast downe in the sight and sense of their owne vilenesse and unworthinesse; these should consider that Gods grace is free; hee lookes not at any thing in us in the bestowing of his grace. What; dost thou thinke thou art incapable of grace, because thou art unworthy of it? This is a meere fallacy. Doe not cast away thy confidence, because thou seest not in thee that goodnesse thou desirest. It is goodnesse enough for thee, to bee bad enough in thine owne esteem. Be but vile enough base enough, bad enough, and then thou art good enough

Luk. 1. 53.  
Esay 55. 1.

enough to partake of grace. Thine emptinesse wil make some way to fulnesse, *Luke 1. 53. He fills the hungry with good things. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and yee that have no silver, come buy wine and milke without money; yea, or monies worth; all conditions of our own worth and merit are here utterly excluded. Therefore comfort thy selfe and cheare up thy heart, thou poore unworthy sinner, in this, that God is most free of his love; though thou hast nothing whereby to deserve any grace from God, yet he hath enough in himselfe to move him to give to all poore dejected and humble sinners.* The

The devil (it may be) will teach thee to put a price upon Gods wares ; hee will make thee beleeve that thou must have thus much holinesse, or thus much obedience, or thus much faith to purchase or procure the love of God, as if wee had grace from God by way of exchange, we being thus and thus qualified: but I tell thee that thou must come to God with a bare naked hand, with a poore emptie soule, else thou art uncapable of his grace. Me thinks this should uphold poore soules that faint, and are ready to sinke under the weight and burthen of their sinnes, mourning like *Rahel*, and will not be comforted,

*Ion. 2. 8.**Heb. 4. 16.*

forted, casting away their hope and confidence; yea, and forsaking their owne *mercy by waiting upon lying vanities, Ion. 2. 8.* Whereby they doe not onely rob God of the glory of his grace, but even defraud their owne soules of comfort through slavish feare and vnbeleefe. Hath not the Lord made a generall invitation, calling to the throne of grace all hungry, thirsting, and mourning soules, that so they might partake of his wine and milke? Yea, that they may receive mercy, and finde grace to helpe in time of neede, *Heb. 4. 16.* If God hath given thee but a heart to desire grace, thou hast a warrant

warrant to beleeve that  
God will freely bestow it  
upon thee. For *hee will fulfil  
the desire of them that  
feare him; He also will heare  
their cry, and will save them,*  
*Psal. 145. 19.* I tarry the  
longer upon this point, for  
the comfort of those poore  
ignorant, fearefull and un-  
beleeving soules, whose  
consciencs speaking bitter  
things against them,  
passe the sentence of death  
upon themselves, as uncapable  
of any grace, because  
they are guilty of these and  
these sinnes. If they were  
thus & thus qualified (they  
say) they should have some  
hope that God would be  
good unto them; but know  
thou poore deluded soule,  
that

*Psal. 145.  
19.*

Ephes. 1. 4.

that no mans goodnesse is the ground of Gods love unto him: no, no, it is Gods love is the cause of our goodnesse: *Ephes. 1. 4. Hee hath chosen us that we should be holy.* Holinesse is not the cause, but the effect of Gods loving us. Thou must bee in Christ, before ever thou canst bee good, or have any inclination unto goodnesse: for as the branch cannot beare fruit of it selfe, unlesse it abide in the Vine, *Iohn 15. 4.* no more can we, unlesse we be in Christ.

Ioh. 15. 4.

He ac-  
cepts of us  
in Christ.

It followes: *whereby hee accepteth of us in Christ.* This truth is evidenced by divers places of Scripture, *Ioh. 1. 17. The Law was gi-  
ven*

ven by Moses, but grace and truth came by Iesus Christ.

So Ephes. 1. 5, 6. Hee hath predestinated ~~us~~ to bee adopted through him; and in the next verse, Hee made us accepted in his beloved: Which places, and divers other doe plainly teach us, that all grace bestowed upon us, is by the meanes of Iesus Christ, and therefore is well called the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, because without Christ no grace can come to sinfull men. Hee is the conduit pipe in and thorow whom all grace runs from the Father unto us, hee is the head which conveyes all spirituall life, sense, and motion into all his mem-  
C                      bers,

Col. 4. 19.

Ioh. 1. 16.

bers, which was typified by that Oyntment which ranne downe from *Aarons* head to his beard, and so to the skirts of his garment. *In him it pleased the Father that all fulnesse should dwel, Coloss. 1. 19. And of his fulnesse we receive grace for grace, Ioh. 1. 16.*

So that from hence wee may learne, unto whom wee are to returne the praises of any good thing wee partake of, whether already exhibited, or promised: God in Christ is to be glorified for all. Therefore such as sacrifice to their owne nets, do sacrilegiously rob God and Christ of their due. We are not able to thinke a good thought,  
much



muchlesse to speake a gracious word, most of all unable unto any pious and holy worke without Christ: for without him *we can doe nothing, Ioh. 15.5. It is God which worketh in us both the will and the deed, Phil. 1.13. Not I, saies Paul, 1 Cor. 15. 10. But the grace of God in me.* If God bestowes upon thee any good which hee hath denied unto others; it is not because hee saw thee better, or more worthy than another, but because hee is pleased to bee more gracious and mercifull unto thee, in Christ, than to another.

Againe, here wee learne whether to goe for such grace as is wanting in us :

C 2

seeke

Ioh. 15. 5.

1 Cor. 15.  
10.

seeke it from God through Christ. What, doest thou hope to finde it through thy service, thy prayers, thy good meaning, or good workes? Away with these menstruous rags; goe to God through Christ: *No man commeth to the Father but by him, Ioh. 14. 6.* All other hopes and helpes without Christ, are but as Ægyptian staves, unto which if a man leane, they will strike into his hand and pierce it. Make sure of Christ by beleeving, and then sure of grace: Want of true union and communion with Christ, makes seeming grace in many temporizers to welter and come to nothing, as standing

ding pits and shallow  
brooks drie up in Summer  
for want of some fountaine  
and spring to fill or feed  
them.

It followeth: *Forgives  
us our sinnes.* This also is  
evident, *Ephes. 1. 7.* By  
whom wee have redemption  
through his blood, even the  
forgivenesse of sins according  
to his rich grace. Hence it is  
that the Lord proclaimes  
himselſe, *Exod. 34. 6. Gra-  
cious, mercifu'l, forgiving  
sinne:* as if the fruit, yea, the  
excellencie of his grace lay  
in the forgivenesse of our  
sinnes, grace being illustra-  
ted in this act of forgive-  
nesse, as much as in any o-  
ther. Benefits bestowed  
upon us, though they pro-  
ceed

Forgives  
us our sin.  
*Ephes. 1. 7.*

*Exod. 34. 6.*

ceede meereley from love, doe not so much magnifie the clemency of the giver, as the setting downe by great wrongs and intolerable injuries, or requiting of evill with good. Many a man will easily give, that cannot so easily forgive. Herein appears the excellency of Gods grace, in passing by our infinite and lothsome iniquities and transgressions. To say truly, it is only grace which can forgive, forgivenesse being a free and gracious pardoning of some fault committed, and of some punishment deserved.

Besides, the grace of God is the more to bee magni-

magnified in that it extends unto all finnes; great as well as small, and small as well as great. For if God should forgive some and not other some, it would be thought that hee is either not so willing, or not so able to remit all sinne as some, yes, his grace reacheth to the forgivenesse of all sinne, *Coloss. 2. 13.*

*And yee which were dead in finnes, hath he quickned together with him, forgiving you all your trespasses. So 1 Ioh.*

*1. 7. The blood of IESVS CHRIST cleanseth us from all sin: the guilt of one transgression makes us liable to eternall torments: and our sins have beene multiplied, they are like the sand by*

the sea-shore, innumerable, yet grace is able to remit all. Then are the Romaniſts foully mistaken. First, in saying that some finnes need no forgivenesse; and secondly, that some finnes may bee forgiven without the free grace of GOD. Some sins (they say) need no forgivenesse, as Concupiscence which they make to bee no sinne; whereas in truth it is the spawne and seed of all sinne, as *Iam. 1.*

*Iam. 1. 14.*

*14. Every man is tempted, when hee is drawne away by his owne concupiscence, and is inticed. Againe, they say that many veniall finnes which are not done against, but besides Gods Commandements, and which*

which are not acted with a perverse minde, with a rebellious heart against God; these sins, though they displease God, yet they make not God displeased with the doer of them, and therefore may bee done away by our selves, through the saying over a few *Ave Marias*, or the doing of some worke of charitie, or if that will not serve the turne, a little Holy-water will wash away all filth, or if that faile, the breath of a Bishops blessing will blow away their sinne; or if all these faile here, a little Purgatory-fire hereafter with his holinesse pardon, will make them as cleane as need be. Most horrible and

blasphemous untruthes against the grace of God, which alone is the prime cause and chiefe meanes of the forgivenesse of all sin,

Esa. 43. 25. *Esay 43. 25. I am hee that putteth away thine iniquitie for my owne sake.* If thou

Ezek. 18. 4. *shalt perish, for the soule that sins, it shall die, Ezek.*

18. 4. *If sins be forgiven, God must doe it: for this is a prerogative royall proper to the Lord, who can forgive sinnes but God onely? Mar.*

2. 7. *If God forgives any sins, it must be of his meere grace, Eph. 1. 7. For his owne sake.*

In the second place let the consideration hereof provoke



provoke us to unfained and hearty thanks , for that when our estate was so desperate , our condition so damnable , as there was no possibility of deserving grace, wee were so farre indebted to the law of God , as noway able to make satisfaction , that then the LORD of his rich grace should forgive all. Suppose thou wert ready to bee cast into prison by thy Creditor for a thousand pounds , all thou hast to bee seized upon and sold , and yet thy Creditor unsatisfied ; at length in meere pittie , hee should set thee free and bestow great things upon thee: oh , how would thy heart bee knit to such a man !

man! thou wouldest thinke,  
that thou shouldest never  
bee able to requite his love:  
God hath done ten thousand  
times more than so for  
thee; how then art thou  
bound to love him, to  
praise him, to tell unto o-  
thers, what great things  
the Lord hath done for  
thee? What, all debts  
forgiven? all reckonings  
cleered, and made even be-  
twixt the Lord and thee,  
without any satisfaction  
made on thy part? What,  
no accusation in that blacke  
and terrible day lyable a-  
gainst thee? All sinnes  
done away through his  
free grace? O the deepe-  
nesse of the riches of his  
mercy! How un-utterable  
is

is his goodnesse? What wilt thou render unto the Lord for his unspeakable grace? How should this inflame thy heart with the love of God, as *Luk. 7. 47*? Such as doe not heartily love the Lord, may feare they have no part, no share in his rich grace. Vnthankfulnesse is a grievous sinne, and that which moves the Lord (I am perswaded) many times to hide away the joy and comfort of the pardon of their sinnes from many of his children. How ready are many, if they bee but a little crossed in some petty matter, to swell and hang the lip; yea, with a little helpe, could bee perswaded to quarrell, and be  
angry

angry with the Lord , as *Ionas* was ? If we fall short of our hopes in some good thing we have promised to our selves ; or if God cut us short of some outward comforts lent unto us , what grumbling and repining is there against the wisdom and righteousness of our good God ? All sense of his infinite love in forgiving an infinite debt unto us is swallowed up , wee have little joy in it , and God hath as little thanks from us for it ; whereas , better lose all the world , than misse this grace : for , as *Mat. 16. 20.* *What will it profit a man to gaine the whole world , and lose his soule ? which doth*  
perish

*Mat. 16. 30.*

perish without it partake of the grace of God.

It followes: *Gives us his Spirit here.* This necessarily followes, as Sanctification succeeds Iustification, Ezek. 36. 25. *I will powre cleane water upon you, and ye shall bee cleane from all your filthinesse.* Here is our Iustification. Then followes in the next verse: *A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit wil I put within you.* And againe the 27. verse, *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walke in my statutes, and yee shall keepe my judgements, and do them.* Which words imply our Sanctification; Gods Spirit is made manifest in us, by our walking in Gods Com-

Give us his Spirit:

Ez. 36. 25.

Commandemens : which wee can never doe to any purpose, untill by the Spirit corruption bee deaded, and grace invived in us. Grace in the child of God workes in him more and more sanctificatiō through the Spirit, that is, a cleansing of our selves daily from all filthinesse; and never can we have any evidence of the truth of grace (as shall bee made more plaine hereafter) or of our justification, but by our sanctification; untill wee see sinne purged, wee may not thinke that it is pardoned; for whomsoever Christ frees from the damnation of sinne, hee doth also deliver from the dominion

Rom. 8.1.

minion of sinne. From hence then we may be assured of the presence and abode of Gods Spirit in us; which who so hath not, partakes not of grace, is none of Christs, *Rom. 8. 9.* is none of Gods, *Gal. 4. 6.* *Because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.* If the Spirit of God hath taken up its abode in thee, all the house shall fare the better for it; it will worke a holy change in thee, it will make thee a new creature, changing thy thoughts, words and workes, from evill unto good. For as every creature in nature hath a facultie to produce its kinde: (*Doe men gather grapes of thornes,*

thornes, or figges of thistles?  
*Math. 6. 16.* No, Thornes  
produce thornes) so a san-  
ctified and a gracious heart  
brings forth fruits of holi-  
nesse and righteousness,  
fruits agreeable to the na-  
ture of the Spirit. If the  
holy Spirit of God once  
takes footing in the heart  
of a man, as the Idoll *Da-  
gon* fell downe as soone  
as the Arke of God was  
brought neere unto it: so  
downe goes Satans throne;  
a man is no longer a slave  
to his base lusts, no longer  
under the bondage of any  
one sinne: *For where the Spi-  
rit of the Lord is, there is free-  
dome and libertie, freedome  
from the slavery of any  
corruption, freedome from  
the*

2 Cor. 3. 17.



the bondage of any ruling  
sinne.

And last of all, eternall  
life hereafter, *Rom. 6. 23.*  
*The gift of God is eternall*  
*life. So 2. Thes. 2. 16. who*  
*hath given us everlasting*  
*salvation, and good hope*  
*through grace.* Thus have I  
presumed through your pa-  
tience to tarry a while upon  
the explanation of the de-  
finition of that grace which  
is the fountaine and well-  
head from whence al grace  
is derived unto us.

And eter-  
nall life  
hereafter.

Now to proceed in the  
unfolding of the Differen-  
ces betwixt true and coun-  
terfeit grace. The first dif-  
ference (as hath beene said)  
lieth in the ground or root  
from whence true grace  
sprin-

springeth. If thou wouldest not bee deceived, or mistaken about the truth of thy grace, do but seriously consider with thy selfe, out of what soyle, or from what root, that grace which appeareth, and peradventure thou beleevest to be in thee, did spring and come forth; whether from the seed of God, from the presence and working of the Spirit, or out of Natures garden, or from education, or else out of some worldly, carnall, and by-respects; if it came not from God, it will quickly appeare in its proper colours, it will ere long discover its rottennesse, it will vanish, perish, and come to nothing.

Some

Some there be in whom the corruption of Nature is so restrained, that they are of a very ingenious temper and disposition, affable, courteous, gentle, peaceable, not given up, nor inclined unto any exorbitant courses, not affecting any notorious vices, but rather hating and abhorring them: who comparing themselves with grosse sinners, and finding in themselves a freedome from those foule finnes which others are defiled withall, doe by and by blesse themselves in their owne hearts, yea, and it may bee, they are taken of others (like or worse than themselves) to bee marvelous

2 Tim. 3.  
15.

lous good people, very religious and gracious persons : whose grace is no other, no better than meere civility, which is as farre from sanctity and true grace, as chalke is from cheese, as the old saying is. Others also there be, who having beene well bred, piously and vertuously educated, sucking (it may be) the Scripture with their mothers milke, as it is spoken of *Timothy*, brought up in a family where haply they had no evill example (though this bee very rare) to corrupt them; doe hold on still that course into which they were entred young and have beene trained up from their childhood,

hood, approving of good duties, frequenting Gods house upon all good occasions, using, (and which is more) delighting in the society of the people of God ; and all this, not by vertue or strength of saving grace, but through an habituated practice of godly exercises, so that they can say as the young man in the Gospell, *I have observed all these from my youth.* Are all these (thinke you) arguments strong enough to prove the truth of grace wrought in the heart of such a person ? Then *Paul* his condition was good enough before his conversion, for he was well educated, brought up, and lived

Matth. 19.  
20.

lived after the strictest manner, touching the righteousness in the Law hee was unrebukeable, yet hee accounts all this but as drosse and dung, as *Phil. 2. 8.* Gods worship and the performance of good duties through long use may bee growne into a very forme, wanting zeale and all spirituall vigour, or life in the performance of them; and will you say that the bare, naked, and customary performing of good duties, is a sure evidence of goodnesse in the heart of the doer of them? No, no, thou mayest bee a Pharisaicall Angell, heare, reade, fast and pray by the strength of thine education

tion, custome prevailing  
so farre with thee, as to  
necessitate the performance  
of pious exercises, doing  
good duties, because thou  
hast alwaies done them,  
and not through the power  
and strength of true grace,  
either inviting thee, or in-  
abling thee unto the per-  
formance of them. True  
and saving grace comes not  
from nature and good  
breeding, but from spiritu-  
all regeneration; from uni-  
on and communion with  
Christ, who is the Head  
which gives spirituall life  
and motion unto all his  
members. Every gracious  
person is knit unto Christ  
by joynts and bands, as  
*Col. 2. 19.* These ligatures

*Col. 2. 19.*

D

an

are the graces of the Spirit, by which every good heart being conglutinate and grafted into Christ, drawes daily from him such spirituall strength, as inables him to the practice of good duties. So that if grace be truely wrought in thee, thou livest in Christ, as a siene in the stocke, and Christ lives in thee, as the root lives in the branches: Then the minde and affection of Christ will bee in thee, for hee that is joyned unto the Lord is one spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17. thou wilt doe good duties not of forme, but in faith, in love, yea with a kinde of holy necessity, as if it were thy nourishment thy meat and thy



thy drinke, as Christ said,  
*To doe the will of thy Father  
which is in heaven.*

Others also there bee  
which will outwardly ap-  
peare very forward in the  
performance of good du-  
ties, they will not misse a  
good Sermon, &c as if  
grace were truly wrought  
in them; when as little, or  
nothing at all is done by  
them in love to the duty,  
but love of themselves, and  
to by (if not base ends.

Some because they are  
brought into a family,  
where the ordinances of  
God are daily on foot, and  
where grace is in some re-  
quest, thinke and know-  
that unlesse they conforme  
to good duties, and make

some shew of godlines, ther will be no abiding for thē, they shal be nothing set by: whereupon they resolve to draw in the same yoke with others, (though good duties be in truth a very yoke unto thē) and hold quarters with the rest of the family, putting on a vizard of grace, either to hedge in some favour of their master mistris, or some other of the family, or to be well-esteem'd of amōgst the rest.

And there be others that will be forward in the best things, that so their masked godlinesse may bee a Lure to draw others to trade and commerce with them, that so they may with the lesse suspitiō prey  
upon

upon the simplicity and innocency of honest hearted people with whom they hope ( making a shew of godlines ) to have negotiation. Many such like there are, who in truth are no other than painted and garnished sepulchers, having within nothing but rottennesse & corruption. Whereas true grace makes the childe of God to appeare and seeme to be godly, because he is so; & to practise goodnesse, for the love of goodnesse, and not of goods as many hypocrites doe.

A second and a maine difference betwixt sound and counterfeit grace, is proceeding and growth: false and counterfeit grace

D 3

doth

2 Tim. 3.  
13.

doth not, cannot grow better and better, but stands at a stay, or else is in some declension; *For evill men and deceivers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,* 2 Tim. 3. 13. whereas true grace is still of the mending hand, and growes many wayes.

A gracious person growes first of all into more acquaintance with his owne heart, *The heart is deceitfull and wicked above all things, Ie. 17. 9.* The hart of man hath in it a bottomlesse gulse of deceit: whenc it comes to passe that wee can hardly bee brought to beleeve how vile wee are, and what wickednesse we are prone unto. When the  
Prophet

Prophet had told *Hazael* what havocke hee would make in Israel, how barbarously and cruelly hee would deale both with women and children, dashing their infants against the stones, and renting in peices their women with child, 2 King. 8. 12. *Hazael* answers him with a kinde of abhorring such wickednesse, as if hee were a beast rather than a man, if hee should act such mischief, *Am I a dog, &c?* Experience telleth us that this wickednesse lay in his heart, as much as hee seemed to abhorre the committing of it, at the hearing of it. And thus it is also with good men, who will

not beleeve what evill lurketh in their hearts : as appeares by *Peter*, who being told by Christ, that they all would flinch from him, *Peter* (not knowing the imposture of his naughtie heart) replies, that whatsoever became of him hee would stick to him; whereas of all other hee most denied him. But after the Lord had looked upon *Peter* with a gracious aspect, hee came to see, and to know his owne heart better than before; hee more sees, and observes his owne vilenesse and unworthinesse, for the more grace, the more sight of our corruption, as *Abraham*, the more familiar he grew with  
God

God, the more hee humbled and abased himselfe: This is one singular property of a good heart, the more grace it receives from God, the more disgrace it doth cast upon himselfe, in the sense of his owne unworthinesse. After that *Iob* having heard of God by the eare, came to enjoy a more cleare evidence of him by the eyes, presently he abhorres himselfe, and repents in dust and ashes, *Iob* 42. 5, 6. *Paul* (after hee had tasted of grace,) confesseth himselfe a blasphemer, a persecutor, &c.

Secondly, a gracious person growes more and more into the hatred of his old

*Iob* 42. 5, 6.  
1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Ez. 36. 32.

Hos. 14. 9.

old pranks and courtes; *He is ashamed and confounded for his former wayes,* Ezek. 36. 32. hee will no more of his old wayes, but sayes of them, as Ephraim of his Idols, *Hosea 14. 9. What have I to doe any more with Idols?* As a child will no more play with that candle which hath burnt his finger and made it to smart: Even so the child of God considering how little fruit there is in those things whereof he is now ashamed; calling to minde how many wayes sinne hath made him smart in his body, in his estate, in his name, in his conscience, he is now so farre from delighting in his old companion



nion, so far from harbouring so mischievous and hurtfull an inmate as sinne hath proved to be, that hee can not brooke its sight, or presence; the more hee thinks of his old finnes the more hee abhorreth them, considering how much good a long time they hindered him of, and how much evill they have brought upon him. He sees before him a way of joy and comfort unto his soule, beset with many sweet and precious promises, adorned with many benefits & blessings: his heart is now so fixed upon this way, that hee growes more and more in love with it; all other wayes, in comparison of

of it, hee hates and abhors, hee will not exchange the new for the old, for all the world to boot.

3

Psal. 42.1.

Thirdly, a gracious heart growes more and more into a longing for Christ: *As the Hart brayeth for the rivers of waters, so panteth his soule after Christ, his soule thirsteth after him.*

That fellowship and communion which hee hath with Christ in his holy ordinances, is most sweet and comfortable unto his soule; and yet this hee knowes is but a glimpse of that comfort hee shall partake of, at the appearing of the Lord Iesus: Therefore hee longeth for that day, knowing that when Christ  
his

Col. 3. 4.

his life shall appeare, then shall hee also appeare with him in glory, *Coloss. 3. 4.* Now take an hypocrite, and temporary professour at the best, and it will soone appeare that hee growes none of these wayes. First, hee growes not into acquaintance with his owne heart, for that doth every day more & more deceive him. Secondly, hee growes not into a hatred of his old wayes, for hee is still the same hee was, as rotten at the core as ever hee was, and as well pleased now with his lusts as before; though happily for some by-respect hee may seeme to forbear them, and hinder or suppress the *Paroxysme*

roxysme and returne of them. Thirdly, as for loving the appearing of the LORD CHRIST, hee doth it not, hee cannot doe it heartily, whatsoever outwardly hee may make shew of; for hee cannot bee ignorant of that which Christ hath said of hypocrites, which say, but doe not, or doe all their workes to bee seene of men, and take Gods Covenant into their mouths, but hate to bee reformed, that none of these shall escape the damnation that is to come. The consideration of which things, workes in them a dread of the dreadfull and terrible day of the Lords comming, wishing it might never

Mar. 22.33.

never bee, or ever be deferred.

A third difference, is in the failings and falling of those that bee endowed with true grace, and those that are hypocrites. For wee may not say, that grace is perfect in the best of Gods children, because in this life, so long as wee abide in this earthly tabernacle wee must looke for no perfection: in many things wee sinne all; nay, the childe of God may have many relapses into the same sinne, though he have a sound heart, and labour to walke uprightly towards God, and men: yet there is a great deale of difference betwixt his relapses, and the

the falls of those whose hearts are not sound.

Rom. 7. 15.

First of all, a gracious heart alloweth not of the committing of any sinne, *Rom 7. 15. I allow not that which I doe.* If hee bee prevented and overtaken with any evill, hee approves not of it, his heart is not delighted or affected with the doing of it. When *David* had numbred the people, the Text sayes that *his heart smote him*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. Which shewes, that though hee were overtaken, yet hee did not allow of the evill hee had done. Whereas an hypocrite, howsoever hee may seeme outwardly to quarrell with himselfe, or to bee angry

angry with his sinne, yet all is well betwixt his heart and his sinne, as the Ferryman in the Boat, hee lookes one way, though moves another. Hee wants that principle *Grace*, which alone opposeth sinne, and makes not onely the judgement to mislike it, but checkes the conscience, and grieves the heart for it; whereas a wicked heart wanting this principle, may haply resolve against sinne, and promise better things: as *Pharoah* told *Moses*, that he would let the people of Israel goe, but presently returns to his old hardnesse and stubbornnesse.

Therefore let all such as will either . speake against

gainst sinne, or confesse sin and seeme to bee sorrie for sinne, and yet upon every occasion freely and readily returne to the practice of sinne, looke to themselves, for there bee seven abominations in their hearts, they are under the power of sin, they are in the snares of the devil, being taken of him at his will. Howsoever where true grace is, there may bee relapses through infirmities, and violence of temptation, yet to take fire with every little touch, to bee drawne into sinne upon every little or light occasion, and to bee possessed with true grace are things utterly incompatible.

Secondly, a gracious heart



heart is bettred by his fals.  
He growes more and more  
(as was said even now) into  
acquaintance with his own  
heart: he sees his own frail-  
tie, he is ~~more~~ fearefull of  
falling, as the old saying is,  
*The burnt child dreads the  
fire.* He is more carefull of  
his wayes, and watchfull  
over himselfe, as one that  
is climbing up into a tree,  
if one foot hath slipt, or the  
brough broke on which  
hee stood, how doth hee  
tremble; how carefull is  
hee of sure footing, lest hee  
fall? So the child of God  
being by occasion fallen  
into any fault, takes heed  
unto his steps, &c. gathers  
his wits together, to keepe  
himselfe upright from fal-  
ling

ling againe ; whereas the hypocrite is no whit at all bettered by any sin, something he may be terrified, there may bee some pause, some forbearance, but no bettering : some say, a leg once broken, and well set againe, is stronger than before ; it is true in grace, for this growes more strong after a fall than before. As appeares by *Peter*, who though at first he was shaken by the breath of a maiden, yet like a Cedar in *Lebanon* grew so strong after that death it selfe could not shake, or overturne him.

Thirdly, the falls of the righteous drive them closer unto God by prayer and

and godly sorrow. How was *Dauids* heart broken after his fall? What heart-broken petitions did he put up unto the Lord, to wash him thorowly from his iniquity, and to cleanse him from his sinne, to create in him a cleane heart, to restore unto him the joy of his salvation, and to stablish him with his free Spirit? whereas a gracelesse heart is either senselesse of his danger, and GODS displeasure, and therefore seekes not to God by prayer, that so hee may make his peace againe with God; or else if he be griped or stung a little, hee seekes to allay his griefe by Musicke, as *Saul* did, or with  
mercy

merry company or pastimes  
to put it from him.

Rom..7.24.

Fourthly, the falls of the  
godly make them to com-  
plaine of themselves, and  
cry-out upon their sinne, as  
*Paul, Rom. 7. 24. O wret-  
ched, &c. So David, Psal.*  
*51. 3, 5.* whereas a grace  
lesse heart is ready to exte-  
nuate his sin; would none  
did worse than this; I hope  
this is not such an hainous  
matter: or else excuses him-  
selfe, and ready to lay it up-  
on others. But the childe of  
God, with a kind of indig-  
nation aggravates his sin,  
abhorres it with a detesta-  
tion, intreats the Lord for  
mercy in the pardon of that  
is past, and for aid to helpe  
him in time to come.

Last

Last of all, a gracious heart by his falls hath his heart knit more strongly unto the Lord. O how much doth he thinke himselfe bound unto God, for sparing and not confounding him? What shall he render unto the Lord, for bringing his soule out of the snares of the Devill, and delivering him from the danger into which sin had plunged him? He confesseth that it was Gods mercy that he was not consumed. And because God hath spared him, his soule is knit more strongly unto the Lord, than ever before. I have read (how true it is I know not) of a great kindnesse that a Li-  
on

on did shew unto a man,  
who had formerly pulled a  
thorne out of his foot; and  
will not grace teach a man  
( thinke you ) to love the  
Lord for doing greater  
things for him ? Nature  
teacheth us, to love  
those that preserve our  
bodily lives, or have res-  
cued us in extreame dan-  
ger; and shall not grace doe  
this much more ? When  
the childe of God seeth  
how the Lord hath saved  
once more his soule from  
death, and againe kept him  
out of hell into which hee  
was like ( desperately ) to  
have fallen; such love how  
shall hee ever be able to re-  
quire ? how dares hee for-  
get such kindnesse ? When  
hee

hee considers what the Lord hath done for his sinfull soule, his heart melts within him, & with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, hee tels the Lord from whence his helpe and deliverance came, hee tels the Lord ( because the world shall know the thankfulness of his heart for mercy received ) that his soule shall for ever praise him and all that is within him shall blesse his holy Name. Hee calls upon his soule; as *David* did, to doe her duty in this kinde. *My soule praise thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits*  
*Psal. 103.2.*

So that you see there is a wonderfull great difference

E                      rence

rence betwixt the falls of those that partake of grace, and such as want it. Howsoever sometimes a strong corruption & a violent temptation may shoulder out or keepe downe the worke of grace in Gods children, yet hee is not pleased with this condition of his; for these relapses and prevarications of his, doe cost him hot water and the setting on, hee hath many a gripe and sting, many a heart-breaking groane by them: whereas those that yeeld any voluntary subjection to their lusts, and give their evill affections the reines; though sometimethey may feelee and expresse some gripes and horrors of conscience,



science, yet by that which hath beene spoken, it is evident, that they are farre from any evidence of true grace.

A fourth and last difference, 'twixt sound and counterfeit Grace, lyes in perseverance. Counterfeit grace is but temporary, it looks fresh, and seemes to flourish for a season ; but every little frost of adversitie; or blast of trouble, nippes it in the head, and makes it give in. If he perceives that hee is like to misse of his hopes and projects, or some rubs will bee in his way, or that is profession bring trouble or persecution ; then he gives in, he thinks it is good flee-

4

ping in a whole skin, and therefore falls off, whatsoever profession hee hath formerly made : And that because hee wants a sound bottome, hee is not built upon the Rocke Christ: his principles were from Nature, education, or the world; and not from union and communion with Christ; his holy profession was taken up upon carnall and fleshly termes; not out of love to pietie, but out of selfe-love and by-respects, which whensoever they faile, his pietie quails; if they faile or fall, they beare downe his godlinesse with them: whereas sound grace in an honest and good heart, being built  
upon

upon a sure rocke, the foundation whereof is laid in Christ, holds it out in all stormes, he is no reed shaken with the winde, no wavering weather-cocke, no time-server; he knowes in whom hee hath beleevd, and therefore abides the heat of Summer, the rage and violence of persecution; he endures the frost in Winter, all those crosses and losses which befall him, still runneth with patience that race which is set before him, *Heb*, 12.1. So that it is with hypocrites and counterfeit professors, as with many rotten & worme eaten peares and plummes in a garden: looke upon them, walke

by them and none so beautiful to the eye, none so lovely to behold as they, but lay hands upon them, or shake the tree on which they grow and downe they tumble presently; whereas the fruit which is sound, though it make not so faire a shew, hangs still for all your shaking. Gods people in this are like the Cedars of *Lebanon*, the stronger the wind blowes upon them, the deeper root they take, the surer they stand.

Now in a few words to apply that which hath beene formerly delivered concerning this point of difference. Let that which hath beene spoken, bee a meanes of sending us everie  
rie

rie one into the Closet of his owne heart; let us seriously search and trie our selves, that we be not mistaken about the truth of grace. It is a thing of the greatest consequence that can bee, I meane, the triall of the truth and soundnesse of grace in us; for if we bee deceived in this one particular, wee are undone for ever. A man may bee mistaken in outward things, bee deceived in worldly bargaines, and yet nevertheless a happy man: hee may save his soule, though hee loose his substance: but if hee be gulled in the matter of grace, hee is irrecoverably miserable. Doth it not then stand us upon, (as

I said before ) to consider whether we be deceived or not ?

If there were plenty of washt gold stirring , or great store of bad and counterfeit silver abroad , every one would looke what hee takes , for feare he should bee deceived. O my beloved brethren , these are the dayes wherein many make faire shewes , godlineffe is growne ( in appearance ) into some credit amongst us ; almost every body would bee accounted religious , but as for the power of Religion , and the truth of godlineffe ( God knowes ) it is found in very few : all is not gold that glisters , all have not  
grace

grace that are taken, and doe also take themselves to bee gracious: A man may goe farre in outward appearance, and yet goe to hell in the end, for want of saving grace. As for example.

First, a man may bee free from grosse sinnes, from scandalous crimes, and enormous vices, yea, even loath and detest many evils, as did the Scribes and Pharises, *Luk. 18. 11.*

Secondly, a man may bee strict in the duties of the second Table, just of his word, true in his dealings, as many civill persons, and Gentiles doe by nature, *the things contained in the Law, Rom. 2.*

14. *Cato* and many other Heathens were admirable in respect of Morality.

*Esa. 58.*

2,3.

Thirdly, a man may set up Gods service in his family, and give himselfe to fasting and prayer, as the Iewes did, *Esay 58. 2, 3. Seeke God daily, know his waies, enquire of God the ordinances of justice, as a people that would doe righteously.*

*Mar. 6.20.*

Fourthly, a man may set upon the worke of reformation, joy in a good Sermon, reverence Gods faithfull Ministers, as knowing and beleeving that they are such as feare the Lord, and shew unto him the way of salvation, as *Herod* did, *Mark. 6.20.*

Lastly,



Lastly, a man may leave his old courses and companions as *Simon Magus* did, *Act. 8.* he may be escaped from the filthinesse of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and yet *returne with the dogge to his vomit*, and for want of sound and saving grace bee damned in the end. Now seeing it may be thus tell mee in good sadnessse if thou dost not thinke it to bee a matter of great importance to search and try thine owne heart?

How many thousands be there which come short of these things before named? and yet take up their rest, flatter themselves, and speake

2 Pet. 2.20

speake peace to their owne  
soules, resolving to bee no  
other, desirous to bee no  
better, and therefore neg-  
lect this dutie of triall and  
examination of themselves.  
But assuredly a time will  
come, when the conscien-  
ces of these people (which  
are now cast into a deepe,  
if not a deadly sleepe) will  
be awakened; when death,  
judgement, and hell will  
present themselves unto  
their view, when their sins  
like toads will croake ven-  
geance against them, when  
*Ezekiels booke* will be laid  
open before them, where is  
written within and with-  
out, *lamentations and mour-  
ning and wee*: Then what  
howling? what roaring?  
what

what wringing of hands ,  
and breaking of hearts ? to  
consider that old and new  
sinnes doe bleed a fresh be-  
fore them ; and that many  
thousand thousand recke-  
nings are to bee cleered be-  
twixt the Lord and them ,  
and they not able to an-  
swer one of many thou-  
sands. Then (when it will  
bee too late) they will crie  
out upon themselves , con-  
demning their folly and  
madnesse , that they so tri-  
fled away their time , let  
slip the golden season of  
grace and mercy , passed  
over their foules to Satan  
for momentany bables and  
vanities.

Tell mee then (my be-  
loved) in coole bloud , if it  
be

be not a poynt of high wisdom, to looke to this be-  
times, not to trust our  
hearts too farre in this  
weighty matter, seeing  
our hearts are above mea-  
sure deceitfull, and as those  
lying spirits in the mouths  
of *Ahabs* false Prophets,  
will flatter us, bid us go on  
and prosper, when wee run  
to our owne destruction. I  
beseech you therefore (my  
beloved brethren) by the  
tender mercies of God,  
and in the bowels of the  
Lord Iesus, I entreat you  
to looke to your selues in  
this one particular: search  
and try your owne hearts,  
how things stand betwixt  
the Lord and you; doe not  
desperately run on, as ma-  
ny

ny carelesse bankrupts doe  
never minding to make  
even with their Creditor,  
untill the Bayliffe hath got-  
ten them under arrest, if  
not carried them into pri-  
son. Slight not over these  
things, lest hereafter, when  
it will bee too late, you  
finde and feele that to bee  
true, which now you can-  
not bee brought to feare.  
Consider (I say) with your  
selves what sinne is a live in  
you, what lust is crucified  
in you: whether your life  
bee the life of grace, and  
whether grace be truly be-  
gun and settled in you. Doe  
not thinke these things are  
skar-crowes to mocke chil-  
dren withall, and so slight  
them over, for I tell thee,  
if

if thou canst not finde leasure to search and triethy wayes , that thou mayest turne unto the Lord in seeking for grace , and suing for mercy , thou wilt not finde ( I feare ) leasure to escape the wrath of God , hell , and condemnation.

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*Of the Evidences of true and sound Grace.*

Evidences  
of true  
Grace.

**N**OW I come to the third thing, which in the beginning I propounded, and that is, to consider of the evidences of true and sound grace : the which before I come unto , it will not bee amisse , to let you know , that the worke and  
truth

Truth of grace wrought in the heart of Gods child; hath in Scripture sundrie appellations; though all signifying one and the same thing. Sometime it is called *Spirit*, as Gal. 5.

17. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.* Sometimes it is called *A new creature*,

2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ, let him be a new creature.* Sometimes, *calling*, as in divers places of Scripture, Rom. 9. 24. *Even us whom hee hath called.* 2. Pet.

1. 10. *Wherefore brethren, give rather diligence to make your calling and election sure.* Sometimes, *Sanctification*,

as 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the*

Gal. 5. 17.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

Rom. 9. 24.

1 Pet. 1. 2.

*the Father, unto sanctification of the Spirit.* All which places tend to this purpose, to let us know, that we are then spirituall, renewed, or borne againe, effectually called and sanctified, when the worke of grace is truly wrought in us: Which work sooner or later, more or lesse is wrought in every one of Gods Elect: whereby he becomes purged from the former filthinesse of his flesh and spirit, and sanctified throughout: for as sinne, like an Epidemicall evill, diffused it selfe into all parts of a man; as Wine or Beere put into a musty caske, is all equally tainted; so grace, if it enter into any, it sanctifies him through-



throughout; it puts a spiritual life, not into one or two parts, but into the whole man, renewing every part and facultie of the body & soule: For grace comes into the soule, as the soule comes into the body, not infused by degrees, though it be a maxime in Phylosophy, that the heart first lives: which is not so to be understood, as if life were some while there, when it is wanting to all other parts of the body, but because the heart being first framed is the seat as it were of life, and first of all moves, manifesting life above any other parts of the body. So grace is wrought at once, though it growes by degrees, being

ing first weake, as is a babe before wee bee strong men in Christ. Know also, that though grace once wrought, be infused into the whole man, yet it shewes it selfe no alike in all faculties at all times, because of the contrary habit of corruption, which is stronger in some part and faculties of the body and soule, than in other some; yet if the life or grace bee inspired, it shewes it selfe more or lesse in the whole man. Thus much I thought fit to premise, to let you understand, that if the truth of grace appeare in any one thing, though not in another, or but weakely, you may assure your selves that  
that

that you are truly regenerate, and so members of the Lord Iesus by spiritual union, never after to be rent off from him, as more largely hereafter shall be proved. Now to the Evidences.

*The first Evidence of Grace.*

**T**He first evidence of sound grace, is a sanctified and saving knowledge of Gods will revealed in his Word. I call it sanctified because it helps forward our Sanctification, *Iohn 17. 17. Sanctifie them with thy truth, thy word is truth;* and I call it Saving, because it tendeth

to

Saving  
Know-  
ledge an  
Evidence  
of Grace.

to our salvation, as appears  
*Coloss. 1.9.20.*

*Col. 3.10.*

*Phil. 2.16.*

This knowledge some  
Divines ( upon good  
ground ) doe make the  
prime and first worke of  
grace in Gods childe, and  
the foundation of all other.  
Hence *Coloss. 3.10. The new  
man is renewed in know-  
ledge*: By new man, you  
are to understand ( as was  
said before ) the worke of  
grace. Hence it is that the  
Gospell is called the *word  
of life, Phil. 2.16.* because it  
is a meanes of working,  
and perfecting this life of  
grace, as *1 Pet. 1.23.* No  
life of grace therefore can  
be, where this Word hath  
not beene ( I understand of  
those that be of yeares and  
capacity )

capacity ) to worke the  
knowledge of God and  
Christ. Not that every  
knowledge of God is life  
eternall, for there is a  
Knowledge of God which  
profits not, as may easily  
be proved.

Ioh. 17. 3.

First all they which be-  
leeve God to be such an Es-  
sence as may be expressed  
by any bodily likenesse, or  
the similitude of any crea-  
ture, know not God a right:  
for if wee conceive God to  
be like any thing that may  
be imagined, wee fancy to  
our selves an Idol: we are to  
conceive of God by way of  
negation, and to abstract  
him from all similitudes,  
*Esay 46. 5, 9.*

*Esay 46. 5.*

Therefore Papists, and  
all

all other, which conceive of God in a carnall and grosse manner, know not God aright, and so gaine little benefit by their knowledge of him.

Secondly, they that beleeve not God to bee the chiefe Good, and the only thing to be desired, loved and feared, know him not aright. Such as cannot say as did *David* of the Lord, *Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? I have none in the earth to be desired in comparison with thee: receive little benefit by their knowledge of God. Therefore all Mammonists and covetous persons, which preferre their riches before God, all Epicures and Bacchanals,*

chanals, which make their belly their god ; all voluptuous and sensuall persons, which make their pleasures and honors their god, know not God aright to their benefit and comfort.

Lastly, all that know not God in Christ, receive no benefit by their knowledge of God. To know God out of Christ, is to know him to be a terrible and angry God, taking vengeance upon us, for our iniquities and transgressions. Therefore if thou wouldest have comfort by the knowledge of God, behold him in Christ, see his justice satisfied, and his wrath appeased by that sa-

F

tisfa-

tisfaction and attonement which Christ hath made for thee so trusting to him for salvation. Which knowledge, because almost every one that lives within the pale of the Church, seemes to have, we are to understand, that this knowledge, if it bee meerely theoricall, will not save us; for it may bee in the temporary beleever an hypocrite: therefore unlesse this knowledge be sanctified, it is no evidence of grace, it profits not. How then may we be assured that our knowledge is sanctified and saving? by these effects:

I  
Saving  
Know-  
ledge.

First, knowledge, if it be sanctified, is operative,  
it



it is a working knowledge, it is no idle knowledge, but reduced into practice, *Psal. 86.11. Teach me thy wayes, O Lord, that I may walke in thy truth.* Grace teacheth a man to put his knowledge in practice. A gracious heart had rather doe, and not know, if it could be than to know, and not to do: he desires to be taught, that hee might walke, not that hee might talke, as too many doe. Hence *David, Psal. 119. 34. Give me understanding, and I will keepe thy Law, yea, I will keepe it with my whole heart.* In saying he would keepe Gods Law, it shewes hee was no Temporizer in Religion, which turns with the wind,

Signes of it.

*Psa. 86.11.*

and runnes with the times; and adding *with his whole heart*, he shewes himselfe to be no hypocrite, who is hollow, not sincere in his profession. Knowledge, if sanctified, helps forward our obedience, resteth not in speculation, but proceeds unto practice.

Temporizers and hypocrites seeke after knowledge, rather to inform their judgement, than reforme their lives; rather to teach others, than to teach themselves. This knowledge wil not save, but deceive us, *Iam. 1. 22, 23, 24.* That is the good and honest heart, who having received the word, keeps it, and *brings forth fruit, Luk. 8. 15.* The word

*Iam. 1. 22,  
23, 24*

*Luk. 8. 15.*

word is a sanctifying, a  
fruitfull word where grace  
is. The knowledge of  
gracelesse persons is a bar-  
ren knowledge, they know,  
but do not; and this kind of  
knowledge is no better than  
ignorance in Gods account,  
*1 Ioh. 2. 4, 5. Hee that saith I*  
*know him and keepeth not his*  
*Commandements, is a lyer,*  
*and the truth is not in him:*  
by keeping his Word, wee  
know we are in him. Hence it  
is, that in the first of *Sam.*  
*2. 12. The sonnes of Eli were*  
*said to bee wicked men, and*  
*knew not the Lord.* How  
could this bee? *Eli* the  
Priest and Iudge, his chil-  
dren, those that attended  
upon the Altar, and recei-  
ved the offerings; and yet

*1 Ioh. 2. 4.*

5

*1 Sam. 2.*

12.

knew not the Lord ? No, their lives being vicious, and themselves prophane, they did not expresse in their carriage any feare of God, they were as those that knew not the Lord. Such as professe they know if they bee disobedient, and to good workes reprobate, are (for all their knowledge ) abominable; where knowledge abides in the braine or lip, and never comes so low as the heart and hand, this knowledge makes way to conviction and deeper condemnation.

Hee that knowes much but doth little, knowes nothing as he ought to know. Knowledge without practice

Etice is a gracelesse knowledge. Science joyned with conscience giveth strong evidence of true grace and the gracious presence of the Spirit of God; which holy Spirit did never shine into that mans heart by supernaturall light of saving knowledge, where there is either joy in, or fellowship with the unfruitfull workes of darkenesse: Therefore if thou knowest, but doest not, thou hast a fearefull doome. *That earth which beareth thornes and briers is reprov'd, and is neere unto cursing, Heb. 6. 8.* Who could indure that tree to stand, which being planted in a fruitfull soile is barren. *Cut it downe, why combreth*

is the ground? Luk. 13. 7.  
Every tree which bringeth  
not forth good fruit, is hewen  
downe, and cast into the fire,  
Mat. 3. 10.

2 Secondly, Saving know-  
ledge is a transforming  
knowledge, such a know-  
ledge as doth cast a man  
into another fashion, it  
moulds him according  
unto the Word, 2 Cor. 3.  
18. we behold as in a mir-  
rour, the glory of the Lord  
with open face, and are chan-  
ged into the same Image,  
from glory to glory. Where-  
as knowledge un sanctified  
leaves a person as it found  
him, unlesse peradventure  
he be growne worse by his  
knowledge. The know-  
ledge of gracelesse persons  
wan-

wanteth both metall and making : If it transformes them not , they have but a *forme of knowledge* , as *Rom. 2. 20.* Now what difference there is betwixt the thing it selfe , and a forme of it , a living man and his picture , it will be needlesse for mee to relate unto you : the same , in a sort , is betwixt a formall and a sanctified knowledge : the former never moves the heart to God , nor yet removes it from evill : the latter both purifieth the heart , and rectifieth the life.

Thirdly , Saving Knowledge vents it selfe for the honour and glory of God , and the good of others. A gracious heart so opens his

Psal. 51. 15.

Prov. 10. 21.

lips, as his mouth may shew forth the praises of God, *Psal. 51. 15.* So also hee desires that his lips may feed many, *Prov. 10. 21.* Hee talkes to edifie; for grace is communicative as well as operative, like to that oyntment of Spikenard wherewith *Mary* anointed *I E S V S*, which filled the whose house with the favour thereof, *Ioh. 12. 3.* where grace is in the heart, the lips are oft dropping of some heavenly counsell, comfort and instructions, such as may tend to the enlargement of *Christs* kingdome: whereas gracelesse persons seeke to set up themselves by their knowledge, it may be they know much



much of God and Christ ,  
but know little for God  
and Christ. How few  
poore soules have beene  
brought home to Christ ,  
by the great knowledge of  
many , who have a great  
name and fame of learning  
and profoundnesse ? How  
many bee there who strive  
for honours and prefer-  
ment , and had rather bee  
accounted great Artills ,  
than faithfull Labourers in  
the Lords Vineyard , im-  
prooving their Talents to  
Gods glory , and the good  
and salvation of those  
poore soules that are com-  
mitted to their care and  
charge ? The Locusts of  
*Rome* will rise up in judge-  
ment against all such un-  
profita-

profitable servants : for they compasse sea and land to make a profelyte; they studie and labour night and day to advance and increase the kingdom of Antichrist : but these are so wedded to their ease , and to their lusts , that they have no heart to take any paines for the LORD CHRIST.

4

Fourthly , and lastly , if thy knowledge be sanctified , it is a growing knowledge. Never was that person borne againe of that immortall seed of the Word and Spirit , both which are full of life , and mightie in operation , who doth not endeavour to goe on

on and on from one grace unto anothers joyning with knowledge temperance, and with temperance patience, and with patience godlinesse, and with godlinesse brotherly kindnesse, and with brotherly kindnesse I ve, 2 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Thus adding grace unto grace, untill he be filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Iesus Christ, unto the prayse, and glory of God, Phil. 1. 11. The more thou knowest, the more thou desirest to adde to that which thou hast. As a new borne babe thou desirest the sincere milke of the word, that thou mayst grow in it, 1 Pet. 2. 2. This growth I beleeve is not meant of the letter onely and

1 Pet. 2. 2.

Ier. 15. 16.

and understanding, but especially of the feeling and power of the Word, every day finding more comfort, and tasting more sweetness in the same. So that the Word, as *Ier. 15. 16.* is the joy and rejoycing of thine heart: It is sweeter to thy taste, than the hony or the honey-combe, *Psalm 19. 10.* And more esteemed than thine appointed food, *Ioh. 23. 12.* Thus if thy knowledge bee sanctified, it groweth in thee, and thou growest into it. And this growth ariseth from two properties in a gracious heart: First, hee receiveth the Word in *thesi*, in the generall, and then hee applyeth it to himselfe in

in *hypothesi* ; in the particular.

First , a gracious heart puts his hand and seale unto every divine truth , beleeving and embracing all those truths he meets withall, whether they be threatnings , promises , or precepts , as *Cornelius* and his company said , *wee are here present before God , to heare all things that are commanded of God, Act. 10. 33.* Receiving the Word , as did those Noble *Bereans* , with all readinesse , *Act 17. 11.* This shewes the soundnesse of his spirituall constitution , and the goodnesse of his heart ; for as it is in nature , a sound constitution feeds heartily upon any good

1 Cor. 2. 4.

good creature provided for him, refuseth nothing that is mans meat, wholesome and good; whereas a bad stomacke will pingle, and picke here a bit and there a bit, taking little or no content in any meates, But those that are daintily cooked, or curiously dressed; even so it fareth with a naughtie heart; unlesse the Word bee nearly hand'ed, spiced with humane oratory, and set out with the enticing speech of mans wisdom, it savours not to his carnall palat, hee findes no more relish in it, than in the white of an egge.

Againe, a gracious heart makes a particular application of the Word, as spoken

ken and belonging unto him; that part of the Word which doth most neerely cōcerne him; he layes surest hold of; and will not part withall. Grace will teach a man. to welcome and make much of that Word which makes most against his sin; and likes that preaching best, which doth best discover the secrets of his heart; and most lively set out the filthinesse of his corruptions: whereas a naughtie heart swells against that Word; which closeth with his bosome sins, he brookes not the Word, because (as the Pharises said) it puts him to rebuke.

Now then to make use of this point. Is it so, that sancti-

*vse.*

Prov. 19. 3.

sanctified knowledge it is  
 sure evidence of true grace?  
 this then may speake hea-  
 vily, first to the heart of  
 all ignorant persons; they  
 must know that their con-  
 dition is dangerous, dead-  
 ly, damnable, because  
 gracelesse; and it is grace-  
 lesse, because they are ig-  
 norant, wanting saving  
 knowledge. An ignorant  
 heart must needs bee a  
 naughtie heart, because  
*without knowledge the minde*  
*cannot bee good, Prov. 19. 2.*  
 What goodnesse can pos-  
 sibly bee where Gods Spi-  
 rit is not? Ignorance doth  
 manifest the want of the  
 Spirit: *For the Spirit is*  
*given unto us, that we might*  
*know the things that are gi-*  
 ven



ven to us of God, as 1 Cor.  
1. 12. Therefore, when  
any know not the things  
of God, needfull to bee  
knowne, it is evident that  
they want the Spirit of  
God. And yet how hard-  
ly can this bee beaten into  
an ignorant head? They  
will not beleeve they want  
grace, or that the Devill  
hath them in his snare, or  
that they are taken captive  
by him at his will; yet thus  
they are, vntill they bee  
brought to repentance,  
*That they may know the  
truth,* 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. O  
the lamentable condition  
of ignorant persons, espe-  
cially such as are folded up  
in the mantle of their owne  
conceitednesse! for many  
of

2. Tim 2.  
2. 25.

of these, though they bee ignorant of the truth, yet the Father of lyes, their lord & master, hath taught them to cavill against the Word, and to lay downe excuses for themselves, that they are not booke-learned, that they have no leasure, or that they have a good heart, though they cannot talke as many doe, that so they may with-hold from them the truth in unrighteousnesse. O the hea-  
 vie doome that belongs to those that *have eyes and see not, cares but heare not, hearts and understand not, that they might convert and be healed!*  
*Esay 6. 10. This is the condemnation, that light is come amongst them, and they love darkenesse*

Esay 6. 10.

darkenesse rather than light,  
*Ioh. 3. 19.* The Lord Iesus  
 shall shew himselfe from hea-  
 ven with his mighty Angels,  
 in flaming fire rendring ven-  
 geance to ignorant persons,  
*2 Theff. 1. 7, 8.* For as Hell  
 is appointed to be the ha-  
 bitation of the wicked, so  
 this is the place of him that  
 knoweth not God, *Iob 18. 21.*

*Ioh. 3. 19.*

Mee thinkes then this  
 should set up the price and  
 worth of knowledge, set  
 an edge upon our appetite,  
 and make us call after know-  
 ledge, and cry for under stan-  
 ding: To seeke her as silver,  
 and search for her as for trea-  
 sures, as *Prov. 2. 3, 4.* O  
 the paines that men take,  
 the dangers they undergoe  
 in the mines to digge out,  
 and

Pro. 2. 10,  
11, 12.

2 Pet. 3. 18.

and fetch forth silver and treasure out of the earth; which when they have gotten, they have got just nothing, if we will credit *Salomon*, nothing in comparison of knowledge. For riches availe not in the day of wrath, *Prou. 11. 4.* Neither silver nor gold shall be able to deliver in the evill day, *Zeph. 1. 18.* Whereas, if wisdom entreteth into thy heart, and knowledge delighteth thy soule, then shall counsell preserve thee, and understanding shall keepe thee, and deliver thee from the evill way, *Prou. 2. 10, 11, 12.* Therefore above all gettings, get knowledge, above all increasings, grow in knowledge, *2 Pet. 3. 18.*

Secondly,

2 Vse.

Secondly, make we tri-  
all of our knowledge whe-  
ther it be rightly qualified;  
what use thou makest of  
thy knowledge, and whe-  
ther thou doest improve  
it to Gods glory, others be-  
nefit and thine owne salva-  
tion. If thy knowledge  
bee a barren and gracelesse  
knowledge ; woe worth  
the time that ever thou  
knowest, for in some sort  
it may bee applied to thee,  
which the Preacher speaks  
*Eccle. 1. 18. Hee that increa-  
seth knowledge, increaseth  
sorrow. For thou shalt be bea-  
ten with many stripes, Luke  
12. 47.* Consider therefore  
what life and power is in  
thy knowledge. Many a-  
bound in know'edge, but  
their

*Eccle. 1. 18.*

*Luke 12.  
47.*

1 Theſſ. 1. 5.

their knowledge is ſo weak and feeble, that it is unable to withſtand any corruption, or to keepe under any one ſinne, in them. It is ſaid of the Theſſalonians, *That the Goſpell was unto them not in word onely, but in power,* 1 Theſſ. 1. 5. Would you know what is meant by power? Even that force wherewith God doth open the heart of his Elect to beleeve, and that ſtrength of the word whereby they are regenerate, and made new creatures. Hath thy knowledge manifested any ſuch vertue, and power in thee? Then it is a ſaving and ſanctified knowledge; elſe but a weak and unprofitable knowledge. Therefore

fore that for time to come  
thou maiest have thy know-  
ledge more powerfull to  
subdue thy corruptions,  
observe these few directi-  
ons following:

First, consider with thy  
selfe wherefore God hath  
endued thee with know-  
ledge; even to make thee  
to differ from others, in  
thy life and practice, and  
that thou shouldest bee a  
light unto others, Phil. 2.

15, 16. *That yee may bee  
blamelesse and pure, and the  
sonnes of God, without rebuke  
in the midst of a naughty  
and crooked nation, among  
whom yee shine as lights in  
the world, holding forth the  
word of life.* Thy know-  
ledge should make thee

Phil. 2. 15.  
16.

a light. True light retains its light in whatsoever darknesse it shines; so thy knowledge, if it be sanctified, will teach thee to governe thy selfe, to looke to thine owne feet, and to direct thine owne wayes; and if it fall out that thou beest cast amongst the children of darknesse, yet their darknesse shall not be able to extinguish and put out thy light, that is, make thee goe, or doe against thy knowledge, but thy light will bee able to discover their darknes, and to guide and direct thee. Again, true light, as it hath light in it selfe, and retaines that light not extinguished by others darknesse, so doth  
it



it communicate light to others; whersoever it shines, others doe or may pertake of it receiving benefit by it, and comfort from it. So thy knowledge, if it bee sanctified, will tend and bend it selfe to the edifying of others. *For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall,* 1 Cor. 12. 7. Every good dispenser of the grace of God, as he hath received the gift, will minister the same to others, 1 Pet. 4. 10. Looke to it therefore, thou hast much to answer for, who hast received much knowledge, and certainly, if thou doe st not good with thy knowledge, thou wilt doe harme with it: thy sin will be ex-

1 Cor. 12. 7

1 Pet. 4. 10

emplary, thou wilt draw on others unto evill, they taking heart and being emboldned by thine example, as appeares, 1 Cor. 8. 10, 11. Now how will thy knowledge doe good to others, if it doth thy selfe none? as it doth not, if sin be as powerfull in thee, as if thou haddest no knowledge.

2

Secondly, thou must side with thy knowledge against thy corruptions: What good will a sword doe to any man, if hee take it not into his hand, and put strength unto it? Helpe thy knowledge to fight against thy corruptions: take part with thy knowledge against thy *lusts which fight against*

against thy selfe, 1 Pe. 2. 11.  
 Thy lusts are too strong  
 of themselves, adde not  
 thou more strength unto  
 them, by yeelding unto  
 them. When thy know-  
 ledge telleth thee that these  
 and these things must not  
 bee, joyne issue with thy  
 knowledge, and say as Jo-  
 seph did, *How can I doe this  
 evill, and sinne against God,*  
 Gen. 39. 9. I tell thee, it is a  
 grievous evill to sin against  
 knowledge when a mans  
 knowledge within cryes  
 out to the contrary: this  
 will make bloudy woundes,  
 and strike deepe gashes one  
 day into thy conscience. In  
 the meane time thou art in  
 a feareful condition, if thou  
 allowest thy selfe in the

1 Pet. 2. 11

Gen. 39. 9.

practice of any one sinne, condemned by thy knowledge? for thou liest open unto any kinde of impiety, yea to any error, even unto Popery; for that person which denyeth the power of godlinesse, will easily bee brought to forsake the profession thereof: if one sinne loved and delighted in, be enough to pull a man from God to the devill, yea, into hell; may it not then pull a man into Popery? A wicked gracelesse person is a fit peece of stuffe to make a Papist of. Hee that will not bee perswaded, nor brought to leave his sinne for the truth sake, will easily be perswaded to leave the truth for his

his sinnes sake. How much better had it beene for such a one never to have knowne the way of righteousness, than to turne away from that holy commandment given unto him? 2 Pet. 2 21.

Thirdly, bee instant and earnest with the Lord in prayer, that hee would manifest his power in thy weakenesse, that he by his holy Spirit would convey some life and power into thy knowledge, that by the practice thereof thou maist manifest the life of thy knowledge in all obedience and good conscience. To this purpose *David* makes many petitions to the Lord, *Psal. 119.88. Quicken mee according to thy lo-*

3

G 4

ving

ving kindnesse, so shall I keepe  
the testimony of thy mouth.

The Scribes and Pharisees  
knew the letter of the Law,  
& were perfect in the Scrip-  
tures, but the Lord by his  
Spirit had not taught them,  
and therefore there was no  
spirituall life nor power in  
their knowledge. Howsoe-  
ver they boasted of their  
knowledge, and thought  
scorne to bee taught of o-  
thers, yet their knowledge  
being but a dead know-  
ledge, did increase their  
judgement; as appears by  
those words of Christ, *Ioh.*

*9. 41. If yee were blind, yee  
should not have sinne, but now  
yee say, wee see, therefore your  
sinne remaineth.*

*A*

*A second Evidence  
of Grace.*

**T**HE next Evidence of Grace is *Faith*, which followeth Knowledge, as the frame doth the foundation; for untill such time as the mind bee inlightened with the truth, no man can beleeve. There must be knowledge, or else there can bee no faith: *Wee have knowne and beleeved, faith* *Iohn.*

*Faith.*

1 Ioh. 4:16.

No man can beleeve in Christ without the knowledge of him; *For how shall they beleeve in him, of whom they have not heard?* *Rom. 10. 14.*

Faith must needs bee an  
G 5 evidence

evidence of grace , because it is a speciall and a principall part and member thereof : not the fountaine of all other graces (as some doe hold) nor the root , out of which all fruits of sanctitie doe spring. For justification , sanctification , faith , repentance , and all other graces are habitually infused by the Spirit of God , at one and the selfsame time in the act of regeneration ; but in respect of us , that is , of our apprehension , and application , one grace goeth before another , as the lightning comes to our sense , and is seene before the thunder-clap bee heard , our sight being more nimble , and  
appre-



apprehensive than our hearing is: yet lightning and thunder are caused both together. So all graces (as was formerly said) are wrought at once, in one instant, though some appeare before othersome, and may helpe forward other graces (as faith doth) not beget other graces, as some doe affirme. For the soule must first bee endued with the life of grace before it can beleeve, unlesse wee will say, that faith may bee in a gracelesse heart: which cannot bee, because being regenerate and sanctified by the Spirit, wee come to beleeve, and to rest upon the promise for the remission of sinnes, and salvation

Gal. 5. 22.

vation by Iesus Christ. S. Paul calls *Faith*, a fruit of the Spirit, by whom wee are sanctified, therefore it cannot bee the efficient cause of our sanctification. It is true that Paul hath a passage tending that way, *Act. 26. 18.* That they may receive forgiveness of sinnes, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith; but by the Word sanctified we are to understand the fruit, not the grace of sanctification: wee are dead in sinnes, untill such time as wee come to bee quickned by the Spirit, *Ioh. 6. 3.* It is the Spirit which infuseth all divine qualities into the soule. The Apostle calleth them *the fruits of the Spirit*,  
Gal.

Gal. 5. 22, 23. Amongst which fruits, Faith is one of the principall, as that which puts a kinde of livelihood into all other graces; and therefore after a certaine manner may bee said to sanctifie us: For according to the strength of faith, will be the power of other graces, hope, love, &c. If faith be weake, hope and love cannot bee strong; little faith, little hope, little love; no faith, no hope, no love at all. So that faith must needs bee a sound evidence of grace; for untill such time as the heart bee purified, and washed in the laver of regeneration, it is either Atheisticall to deprave the Word of God, by

by doubting of divine truths, if not denying them; or else it is Sophisticall to pervert and wrest the Word, so as oft-times bloud commeth out of it to choake and strangle Gods people, in stead of milke to feed and nourish them. But if the heart bee once sanctified by the Spirit, then is faith wrought in us, which doth further, and more effectually cleanse and purifie us through the Word, *Ioh. 15. 3.* Now because as in the former evidence of grace, so in this also many a man and woman is mistaken, the heart being so infinitely deceitfull; it will bee no lost labour to examine the truth of our faith.

For

For you must know that it is possible for a wicked and gracelesse person to beleeve that Christ died for him ; yea to die in a strong perswasion of Gods love and favour, and so of his owne salvation. Hath not experience taught us thus much? Who so confident, who so full of faith (if you will beleeve them) as many vile wretches and gracelesse persons? They wonder what people mean to doubt of Gods love; for their part they never, as yet, called it into question. They thanke God they have ever had as strong a faith as the best, and so they hope to continue. This is evident by examples in the Scrip-

Mica. 3. 11.

Scripture. The Lord by the Prophet *Jeremie* speaks to the wicked Iewes, which had polluted the Land with their whoredomes and malice, which had a whores fore-head, and would not bee ashamed, saying, *Didst thou not still crie unto mee, Thou art my Father, and the guide of my youth?* So in *Mica. 3. 11.* The Lord speaking of corrupt Iudges, of mercenary Priests and merchandizing Prophets, which set the Word to sale, and prophesie for money, saith, that yet will they leane upon the Lord and say, *is not the Lord among us? no evil can come upon us.* By which it appears, that wicked and  
grace-

gracelesse people may bee confident of Gods favour.

How then may wee distinguish the faith of Gods children, from the faith or rather presumption of unbelievers?

There lyes a great difference betwixt them.

The first difference is in the ground, out of which true faith springs, or the meanes by which it is wrought in true beleevers.

True faith is wrought in all Gods children by the ministry of the Word, as *Rom. 10. 17.* First, the Law convincing us, discovering unto us our sinnes, *Rom. 7. 7.* shewing us both the nature and the danger of them, and our misery

I  
Difference  
'twixt  
Faith and  
presump-  
tion,

*Ro. 10. 17.*

fery into which sinne hath plunged us; and not onely so, but an utter impossibility of our selves, either to satisfie the iustice of God for the least transgression, or to bee freed from that wrath and vengeance which hangs over our head, by reason of our sins. The consideration whereof terrifying and afflicting a poore sinner, makes him to cry out as the Iewes did *Act. 2. 37. what shall I doe?* Then commeth in the Gospell, the Word of comfort, and the message of reconciliation, which discovers and prescribes a remedie, whereby a poore sinner may bee brought into favour with God, and  
accepted

*Act. 2. 37.*



accepted with him ; come out of the snares of the devill, and be freed from the curse and malediction of the Law ; and that is, by receiving of the Lord Christ, in whom *all the promises of God are yea, and Amen.*

1 Cor. i. 20

*And by whom wee have redemption through his blood, even the forgivenesse of sins,*

Ephes. i. 7.

*Ephes. i. 7.* Whereupon he begins to hunger and thirst after Christ, seeing and knowing no other way, no other meanes whereby hee may be saved, or have his spirituall wants supplied. As the prodigall saw no meanes of comfort, but starve hee must, unlesse hee get home againe, and bee received into his fathers family:

family; so the poore finner knowes his soule will famish, if hee get not into Christ; and therefore hee labours to bee made one with Christ; his soule hungers and thirsts after nothing so much as Christ: all the world is dung unto him in comparison of Christ. Oh that hee may be found in Christ: to live or dye, Christ is all in all unto him; he layes hold upon his righteousnesse, and shrowds himselfe for comfort under his wings: and as *Ioab* laid hold upon the horns of the Alter, saying, *I will dye here,* 1 Kings 2. 30. So the poore beleever layes hold upon the Lord Christ, resteth only vpon Christ,

Christ, and if he perish, he will perish at the feet of Christ; whereas the faith of unbelievers and hypocrites ariseth either out of their education, common illumination; or from some vaine perswasion of some good in themselves, for which they are perswaded God loves them, or else he would never have bestowed so much upon them, have done these or these thinge for them. So that their faith is no other than a faithlesse confidence, a vaine presumption, or some Satanicall illusion, never wrought in them by the Lord CHRIST, *the Author and finisher of our faith,* Heb. 12. 2. by the ministry of

Heb. 12. 2.

of his Word. For they were never thoroughly humbled, or if they were, it was but for a while, a little Sermon-sicke, their consciences wambling, while the Word was delivered unto them, and no longer; If this mans faith had been begun, or hee begotten againe of the Word of God as a new borne babe hee would more and more desire it, *that hee might grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. for we are nourished with that, by which wee are begotten: but he finds no sweetnesse, takes no true content in the Word, any further than he is sensible of some art of some novelty in the same, which doth affect and delight

light him. Tell mee then (thou that boasteth or presumest so much of thy faith) how thou diddest attaine unto it, when it was first wrought in thee; which if thou canst not, thou hast just cause to feare, thy faith is but thy fancie.

Here a question will fall in very fit to be answered, and that is, Whether every one that beleeueth can tell when or how faith was wrought in him.

This scruple and scrutiny hath troubled many a deare childe of God, who hath beene ready to question the truth of their faith, because they cannot precisely lay downe the time when

when, or the meanes how  
faith was wrought in them.  
For, their education and  
bringing up was alwaies  
godly and religious; from  
their child-hood they have  
entertained the Word of  
God; they have alwayes  
borne a good will to god-  
lineffe, and loved the pro-  
fessours of the truth; al-  
waies approved of the best  
things, and therefore que-  
stion the truth of faith and  
grace in them. For the cō-  
fort of such; let me first of  
all tell them, that if all were  
not well, twenty to one the  
devil would not be so busie  
with them, to perplex and  
trouble them with these pi-  
ous feares and holy doub-  
tings. We seldome heare  
or

or reade of any but the  
Lords people , that have  
these troubles , or that put  
these doubts and questi-  
ons. But for the satisfying  
of thy scruple; consider first  
what Christ said to *Nico-*  
*demus* , *Ioh. 3. 8.* *The wind*  
*bloweth where it listeth, &c.*  
The meaning of which  
words , is to teach us that  
the operations of grace are  
sometimes , as it were , hid  
from the regenerate them-  
selves , neither knowing  
the time when they first be-  
gan to worke , nor whence  
they sprung , nor to what  
measure they will grow.  
Therefore though thou  
canst not tell by what  
meanes , or at what time  
the Spirit of God com  
H meth

*Ioh. 3. 8.*

meth into thine heart, or how at first, its quickning and sanctifying presence gave spirituall life unto thy soule: yet blessed and happy is thy condition, if thou now findest faith to bee wrought in thee, which thou mayest be assured of, if thou findest thy soule enlightned with the saving knowledge and understanding of the truth, if thou hast been abased and humbled under the hand of God, in the sight and sense of thy unworthynesse, and if thou prizest Christ above all the world; labouring to winne him, and desiring to bee found in him, *not having thine owne righteousness, but that which is through*



through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith, Phil. 3: 9, 10. But if thou findest not these to be in thee, then thou mayest well question in the truth of thy faith.

A second difference lies in the fruits and effects of faith: Where grace is, faith workes by love, Gal. 5. 6. A heart knowing and believing what the Lord hath done for it, cannot but love much, Luk. 7. 47. being so dearly beloved. And this love of God workes the heart to a hatred of all things displeasing unto God, Psal. 97. 10. and to a practice of that which he requireth, Psal. 26. 3. Thy  
H 2 leaving

2

Gal. 5. 6.

Psal. 97, 10.

Psal. 26. 3.

loving kindnesse is before mine eyes, therefore have I walked in thy truth. Whereas the faith of the unregenerate workes no change in him, makes him no better than hee was, unlesse it bee in shew and appearance. Confidence of Gods love emboldens him to wickednesse, and makes him to sin more and more, as *Ier. 3. 4, 5.* rather than abate sin in him. Certainly, if ever the Lord spake peace to thy soule through Christ, hee will so enflame thine heart with the love of his truth, his Image, his ordinances, that these will so take up thy heart, that thou shalt not turne againe unto evill, *Psal. 85. 8.*

*Psal. 85. 8.*

Thirdly

Thirdly and lastly, faith in the regenerate makes the heart to stoop to Christs Scepter, to *heare his voice and follow him*. It is faith which apprehends the authority & soveraigntie which C H R I S T hath over us; and approves of the holines and goodnes of his Commandements, and so inclines the heart unto a willing and cheerefull obedience. Whereas the hypocrites faith doth embolden him unto liberty, it makes him loose and licentious, laying all upon Christs backe, saying, Christ dyed for us, his blood shall cleanse us, &c. Let the Ministers of Christ say what they can, threaten

Ioh. 13. 27.

what they will, they are resolved to hold on, they will not shift one foot, nor stir any further than they list. Let judgements be threatned against them, threatned folke (they say) live long; they can laugh in their sleeves at the zeale of Gods servants; no more moved, or removed with a Sermon, than with the wagging of a straw, Oh take heed therefore, that thou beest not deceived in the truth of thy faith: Thou mayest have a great deale of carnall confidence, and bold presumption, and yet not one dram of true saving faith. *Take heed, brethren, lest at any time there be in any of you an evil heart and*

Heb. 3. 12.

*and unfaithfull, to depart away from the living God. Do not thinke that thy coming to Church, thy hearing of Christ preached, and receiving of the Sacraments, are infallible evidences of true faith; for many thousands who take up their Religiō upon trust, and take themselves to bee sound beleevers, have their hearts fraught with unbelieve, their faith being no better, nay scarce so good as the faith of Devils, for they tremble at the power and displeasure of the Lord, whereas these are not once touched, nor any thing affected therewith. And this shall suffice to have spoken of faith, the*

Second Evidence of true Grace.

*A third Evidence of Grace.*

Subduing  
of our lusts.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

Gal. 5. 17.

**N**OW I come to the third Evidence of true Grace, and that is the subduing of our Lusts, and the conquering of our corruptions. This is meant by those words of *Paul*, *I beat downe my body, and bring it into subjection*. By body the Apostle doth meane the old man, sinne and corruption, which doth lust against the Spirit. All such as are truly regenerate by the quickning power of the Spirit, are sanctified (as was said before) in all the faculties

faculties of their soules, and members of their bodies : not only inlightned in their judgements to dislike that which is evill , but their hearts and wills also are set against it. They know that all fleshly lusts doe fight against their soules , and therefore they maintaine open warre with them , and will not yeeld any voluntary obedience or subjection unto them. Grace cannot stand with the regiment of sinne. For as *Paul* saith, *Sinne shall not have dominion over you, for yee are not under the Law, but under Grace.* Howsoever the Lord (to checke the securitie, presumption, pride, selfe-conceitednesse, and

*Rom. 6. 14.*

and unthankfulnesse of his children) may for a while leave them unto themselves, and with-draw (as it were) the powerfull presence of his grace, whereby corruption may bustle, swell, yea and breake forth also; yet by the power of grace, they shall be brought againe to milke, and condemne themselves for those evils wherewith they have beene over-taken, and crie out with *Paul*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* Therefore the Anabaptists and others are foully mistaken, who hold that after the worke of grace is once truly wrought in a man, sinne hath no being

Rom. 7. 24.



ing in him that is regenerate: for you must know that in every one that is regenerate, there is flesh as well as the Spirit: in every faculty there is grace inclining the heart to goodnesse; and there is corruption life a backe-bias, drawing it the contrary way. For grace and corruption in every regenerate person (as *Iacob and Esau* did strive in *Rebecca's womb*) are evermore struggling & striving one with the other: yea there is a continuall warre betwixt them as was betweene the House of *David* and the House of *Saul*; but as the House of *David* waxed stronger, and the House of *Saul* weaker.

So fares it betweene Grace and corruption ; the flesh may strive, but the Spirit overcomes: for by vertue of habituall grace infused, the will is so sanctified, the affections are so rectified, the heart is so purified, as the whole man resignes up himselfe to be at Gods service, imbraceth a holy and a heavenly life, as the only true comfort and sound happinesse, and desires and resolves so to hold on, even unto the end. Therefore they are grossely deceived, who hold that after the worke of grace is wrought in the heart of Gods children; the will hangs like a beame upon the ballance, equally inclining to one hand

hand as well as to the other: A foggie and a mistie errour contrary to the current of the Scriptures, which teach us that a regenerate person labours to keepe a good *Conscience in all things*, desiring to live honestly, as *Heb. 13. verse 18.* That person in whom the worke of grace is wrought, desires and endeavours to bee evermore furnished with the *Panoply*, the compleat armour of God, that so hee may stand fast, resist the Devill, and bee able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: The strength and bent of his will and affections are for God and goodnesse; he chuseth holinesse with

Heb. 18 13.

with a full purpose and resolution to walke in it; hee turnes from his former evils with a detestation of them, he leaves them with a resolution never to take them up againe. As *Ephraim* said, *Hos. 14. 8.* *What have I to doe any more with Idols?* So saith hee of his old courses and companions, *Away from mee;* and as *Christ* to *Peter*, *Get thee behind mee, thou art an offence unto mee, Matth. 19. 23.* Hee daily prayes, and cries earnestly to God for strength against corruption, and wisheth, *O that my wayes were so directed to keep thy Statutes continually!* *Psal. 119. 5.* Hee is not for God to day & the devill to morrow,

morrow, hee is no morning Saint, and evening devill: but desires and endeavours to walke before the Lord in all pleasing, and to serve him in holinesse and righteousness all the dayes of his life. A gracious heart fights against his lusts, hee keeps continuall warre with them, the law of his minde is evermore rebelling against the law in his members, Rom.

7. 23.

Howsoever upon the assault of some furious temptation, some inrode may be made upon him, he may bee wounded, overthrowne, taken prisoner, and (it may bee) a while chained downe by the power of some raging lust, which

which imperiously and cruelly treads and tramples upon him ; yet doth he not yeeld and give himselfe over to the power of lust ; grace within bestirs it selfe , the heart sighs and groanes , and the Spirit runs to God for helpe and succour , as *Paul* in his temptation , 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. Hee longs to bee at liberty , and useth all meanes of enlargement that may bee. Well then , if the case so standeth , consider with thy selfe , what combat thou doest daily maintaine against thy corruptions. *Doest thou delight in the Law of God*, concerning the inner man ? as *Rom.* 7. 22. though thou seest another  
law

*Law in thy members rebelling against the law of thy minde. Are thy failings matter of daily humiliation unto thy soule? Dost thou find and feele that nothing under the Sunne doth more sting and pierce thy heart, then to be at any time overtaken with passions, or carried away with the swing of any corruptions, against thy godly purpose and holy resolutions? What then, cheere up thy drooping spirits, the LORD by the power of his grace hath taken possession of thee: for nothing but grace is able to keepe the love of sin out of the heart, though peradventure (as was touched in the beginning)*  
some

some other thing may for a while keepe it out of thy hand: Civilitie and hypocrisie may a little snib sin, or bid it for a while to stand aside and give way to better things, but it is only grace that strikes this *Goliath* dead, and takes off his head. It is only grace which cures a soule-sicke sinner of those diseases, which by sinne hee hath contracted unto himselfe; as only *Jordan*, above all other waters, could heale *Naaman* of his leprosie. Now lest any one should bring himselfe into a fooles paradise, and please himselfe with an opinion of his owne goodnesse, because of the abating of some sinne, or the laying



laying downe of some base carriage, which formerly hee had taken up: let him know that there is a maine difference between the forsaking of sin, in & through the strength of grace, and any other by-respect whatsoever.

Corruption is kept under in a gracious heart, meerely in love to God, and hatred of sinne, as *Hosea* speakes of those that shall bee converted unto God, *They shall feare the Lord and his goodnesse, Hos. 3. 5.* Though naturally thou mayest love this or that sinne more than ordinary, yet grace will helpe thee to abhor and loath it. a better evidence of grace cannot

*Hose 3.5.*

cannot bee, then when the heart is set against its old love; for it must needs bee a supernaturall power, and the worke of grace, which moves any to dislike and loath that evill which naturally hee loves. Whereas in the hypocrite sinne is sometime forsaken, because sinne hath left him, he hath no meanes of committing it; or else he forbears sin, as many a fearfull dog doth meat in the platter, because of the whippe or cudgell that is held over him: So the hypocrite loves his credit, loves his purse, loves his skin, it may bee; and therefore, lest the committing of some sinne, which hee lingers after, should  
make

make a flaw, or a hole, or rent in him, hee forbears the committing of it. Examine thy heart therefore in this particular, what mooves thee to forbear thy sin? what is the ground of that divorce which seemes to bee betwixt thee and thine old love? If any thing in the world but the love of God and goodnesse; thou art in a bad condition, whatsoever is become of thy sinne.

Art thou one whose heart likes well of sinne, though thou canst not, or darest not commit it? Art thou one, who when thou art convinced of, or reprov'd for any failings, thy heart riseth against the rebuke

buke, though for thy credit or profit sake thou seemest to welcome, & thankfully to entertaine that reproofe? I tell thee, thou art in a dangerous condition: thou hast but weake and slender evidence of grace, if any at all. For where true grace is, there (howsoever, (as was said before) for a time in a passion or temptation, corruption, may prevaile (will be a welcoming of the meanes, and helpes that may keepe us from falling into sin; as appears in *David*, who blessed the Lord and *Abigail*, for the good counsell which she gave him, there also the heart will bleed, and the tongue will freely against  
it

it selfe acknowledge the  
foulencesse of those sinnes  
he hath committed.

Know moreover, that  
the nature of grace is to  
strike at all sinne, great and  
small, whether more or  
lesse profitable & pleasing,  
as *Psal. 119. 104. There-  
fore I hate all the wayes of  
falshood.* A gracious heart  
hath a constant purpose in  
no one thing willingly to  
sinne against God. *David*  
notes them for upright that  
keepe Gods testimonies,  
and seeke him with their  
whole heart, and work none  
iniquity, *Psal. 119. 2, 3.*  
that is, they live not in the  
willing and ordinary pra-  
ctice of any thing which  
they know to bee a sinne,  
whereas

*Psal. 119.  
104.*

whereas hypocrites though they shew a kind of hatred unto some sinnes, yet (as hath been said) they make no conscience of other some.

Many gracelesse persons will sometimes lay downe a sin, but it shall be to take up another for gaine and advantage sake: if they happen to bee freed from the tyranny of some vile affection, they quickly come under the power and command of another as bad, if not worse; as many prodigals turne covetous, leaving one vice to take up another: so that hee is like unto a bond-slave bought and sold from one to another, who although hee oft change his master

master yet doth hee not leave his servile condition. Whereas grace strikes off all bolts and fetters of bondage under sin, and works the heart to a detestation of all wickednesse whatsoever.

A gracious heart his set for the glory of God in all things, in all places, at all times: hee labours to shun all things displeasing to God, or grievous to his Spirit makes conscience not onely of open, but secret finnes, not only of grosse and foule, but of the least evils, not onely murder, but heart-burning or envy, not only of blasphemy and perjury, foule-mouthed sins, but of those

I

that

that seeme more faire, as  
faith and troth, &c. So that  
as some Physiciāshavetheir  
*Catholicon* for the purging  
out of every peccant hu-  
mour: so grace is a Catho-  
like expeller and purger of  
all knowne sins; whereas  
hypocrites & double-min-  
ded men repress sin but in  
part, and that very partially  
too; not out of any ha-  
tred they beare to sin, but  
because of some evill conse-  
quent which waits upon sin.  
He keepes one sin or other  
close, one hole in his heart  
for some base lust or other  
one *Dalila* or darling sin he  
hath, from which hee will  
not be divorced, as if God  
and men must give him  
leave in some thing to take  
his



his liberty ; he hath one sin which all the world shall not bring him out of love withall, much lesse to leave and to forsake it. But let all such know, that God will none of their patcht holinessse and peacemeale reformation ; as good never a whit, as never the better. All such will one day bee confounded, which have not a respect unto all Gods commandements, *Psa. 119. 6.* as shal be made plaine in the next evidence.

*A fourth Evidence of Grace.*

**A** Fourth Evidence of Grace is obedience unto the will of God. The

Obedi-  
ence to  
Gods will.

Ezek. 36.  
27.

Lord by his Prophet tells us, that those which are taken into covenant with him, shall have his Spirit put into them, and *hee will cause them to walk in his Statutes, to keep his Iudgements and do them.* Hence it is that the Apostle saies, *wee are elect through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience;* 1 Per. 1. 2. Unfained obedience unto the will of God, is the character of a gracious heart, for untill such time as grace hath seasoned and sanctified the heart, little or no obedience will appeare in the life and conversation. Hearty obedience doth extinguish a fount heart from an hypocrite. To abound in knowledge

knowledge, to have a form of godlineſſe, to bee forward in the outward profeſſions of the truth, and to partake of the Sacraments, make no eſſentiall difference betwixt a gracious & a graceleſſe heart: *To obey from the heart that forme of doctrine which is delivered*, is a ſure marke to diſtinguiſh the one from the other: *Not the hearers of the Law, are juſt before God, but the doers of the Law ſhall bee juſtified. Rom. 2. 13.* Is it not Lord, Lord, the naked performance of holy duties, which will bring us unto heaven, it is obedience, *The doing of the will of my Father* (ſayes Chriſt) *which is in heaven, Matth. 7. 21.* Bee

Rom. 11.

ye doers therfore of the word.  
not hearers only, deceiving  
yourselves, *1 sm.* 1. 22. All  
knowledge (as hath beene  
said before) without obe-  
dience, is in Gods esteeme  
no better than ignorance:  
*He that saith, I know him, and  
keepeth not his commande-  
ments, is a lyer, and the truth  
is not in him, 1 Iohn* 2. 4.  
Grace teacheth a man to  
reduce his knowledge into  
practice? for by the power  
and strength of grace the  
will of man is made willing  
to obey God in all things,  
so that it will bee our meat  
and drinke to doe the will  
of our heavenly Father.  
Here some will bee ready  
to cry out, and say, that  
by this doctrine wee de-  
stroy

stroy the liberry of mans will , and turne it into a meere necessity. But they speake they know not what. For when wee affirme that by the power of grace mans will becomes willing to obey , this is not to take away or destroy , but rather to rectifie the liberty of our will , which consists not in an unstable changeablenesse to bend every way , but in a settled and firme resolution in al things to doe that which God requireth. VVhen the will by the power of grace doth pitch upon Gods will , adheres unto it with a resolution not to swarve from it, is the will then compelled, or the libertie thereof

violated? No wise man  
dares so say, I suppose.  
*When David said, I will  
keepe thy Statutes, Psal. 119.  
3. And againe, I will de-  
light in thy Word, vers. 16.  
And againe, I have chosen  
the way of thy truth, ver. 30.  
And againe, I will run the  
way of thy Commandements,  
when thou shalt enlarge my  
heart, verse 32. was heere  
any violence, or compul-  
sion offered unto Davids  
will? Or was Davids will  
moved unwillingly, when  
hee intreated the Lord to  
knit his heart unto him, that  
hee might feare his Name?*  
No, no: this desire and ho-  
ly resolution of David pro-  
ceeded from the truth of  
grace infused into his heart;  
after

after which infusion, the will inclines it selfe most willingly and cheerefully, to obey the will of God.

Doe wee not pray daily,  
*Thy will bee done on earth as  
it is in heaven?* Those hea-

venly spirits obey willingly, cheerefully, constantly having neither will nor power to disobey. How

so? are their wills manacled and fettered? or is it a wrong unto them, that they can doe no other?

Surely no, for the power and strength of grace in them, will give them no leave to doe otherwise.

This obeying and serving God, is perfect liberty and freedome; and it is the LORD, by the workes of

Iohn 8. 36.

grace in our hearts , which must make us thus free. Now because an hypocrite wanting grace , may goe far in outward obedience , it will bee very requisite to lay downe some differences betwixt that obedience which is performed by the powerfull worke of grace , & that which is done upon outward and by-respects: For you must know that an hypocrite may goe farre in outward obedience. Did not *Cain* offer sacrifice as well as *Abel*? Did not *Ahab* humble himselfe at the hearing of threatnings , as well as *Hezekiah*? in some particulars *Ahab* out-stripped *Hezekiah* , for hee rent his cloaths, hee fasted, and lay

1 King 21.

27.



lay in sack-cloth, which acts of humiliation are not reported of *Hezekiah*. Did not *Iehu* bestir himselfe in fulfilling the commandments of God? Did not *Iudas* preach? Was not *Simon Magus* baptized? Did not *Ananias* and *Sapphira* sell their possessions, and lay them downe at the Apostles feet? *Act. 5. 1, 2.* And many other instances there may bee brought, to prove how farre hypocrites may wade in outward obedience: therefore outward obedience and conformity is no infallible evidence of true grace. Wherein then lyeth the difference? In these particulars:

First, true grace ayms

at

at the whole will of God, it teacheth a man to walke in all Gods Commandements. As it is said of Zachary and Elizabeth, Luke 1. 6. *They walked in all the Commandements of GOD without reproofe.* Plā. 119. 5, 6. *O that my wayes were directed to keepe thy Statutes, then should I not be confounded, when I have respect unto all thy Commandements!* For, hee that is bound to one, is bound unto all; and he that offendeth in one, is guiltie of all, *I am. 2. 10.* Because our obedience stands ingaged unto God as deeply, and upon as strict termes in all, as in any of his precepts. If thy dealings be uneven, if thy obedience be lame and halting;

I am. 2. 10.

halting; if thou wilt conforme in some things, but not in others; if where pleasure or profit may bee had, there thou takest libertie to transgresse, or art so farre at the becke of others, that they may draw thee to the committing of some evil, or if thou bee ready to wade no further in obedience to God, than may stand with their good liking, thou art farre from true grace: for this would make thy courses regular and uniforme, it would make thee endeavor to bring thy will, to Gods will, and heartily to submit to every duty hee commands thee, not caring who bee offended, so God bee honoured  
and

and pleased by thine obedience: whereas counterfeite grace picks & culls out here and there, such precepts as stand with ease or profit. It will boast with *Saul*, and say, *I have fulfilled all the Commandements of Gods*; yet *Agag* must live, and the fattest of the cattell must be spared: Whereupon *Samuel* told him that hee had not obeyed the voyce of the Lord, *1 Sam. 15. 19.* For to say truth, hee that wilfully and of purpose breakes any one of Gods Lawes, cannot bee said to keepe any of them, because hee keepes them not of conscience; for if hee made conscience of one, he would make conscience of

of all. If *Iehu* his obedience and zeale had beene found, it would have beene manifested in the pulling downe of *Ieroboams* calves, as well as *Ahabs* *Baal*; but his suffering of the one discovered his obedience & zeale to bee unsound, and counterfeited in the other.

Againe, a gracious heart labors to obey at all times, in all places, and in all company. Hee will not for feare or flattery go against Gods precepts. It is not profit, or pleasure, that shall draw him unto evill, for hee resolves and labours to doe righteousnesse at all times, *Psal. 106. 3.* Gods Commandements are not grievous, but delighfull unto

2

*Psal. 106. 3.*

unto him : and therefore as it is said of *Hezekiah*, *2 King. 18. 6.* *Hee cleaves to the Commandements of God, and departed not from them.* Whereas the obedience of the hypocrite is like unto *Ephraims*, *Hosea, 7. 8.* *As a cake on the hearth not turned, halfe baked,* His goodness is as the morning dew, quickly dried up, for hee sets not his delight on the Almighty, *Job. 27. 10.* neither seeketh hee to God at all times.

*Object.*

But doe not the best of Gods children sometimes halt in their obedience?

*Answ.*

Yes, for in many things we sin all, *Iam. 3. 2.* Grace is but imperfect in the best of Gods children, and corruption

ruption in the unregenerate  
part, keeps downe too of-  
ten, and hinders the worke  
of grace: not that corrup-  
tion is of it selfe stronger  
than grace, if God will put  
to his strength: for this  
were to make God weaker  
than man, and the flesh  
stronger than the spirit; but  
because if God at any time  
leave us to our selves, or  
never so little withdrawes  
the power of his Spirit, we  
are more inclined to fol-  
low the sinfull motions of  
our corrupt flesh, than the  
holy and gracious inclina-  
tions of the Spirit of God:  
For if *Adam* in his inno-  
cencie, when hee knew no  
evill, being left but a while  
unto himselfe, and wan-  
ting

ting the efficacious presence & assistance of Gods grace, was so quickly, so easily drawne to sin; much more the corrupted children of sinfull parents, who are but in part sanctified, and have too much affinity with sin, are easily brought to disobey God, if hee help us not with his Spirit against the motions of sinne, and backe us against all tentations and provocations to disobedience. For you must know that God is not alwayes alike present with his children, but in great wisdom withdraws from them sometimes that effectuall presence of his grace, which at other times hee affords them, and that  
for



for these and some other causes.

First of all, to shew us our owne instabilitie and weaknesse, how unable we are of our selves to stand any longer than wee are upheld of him. If hee takes from us his Spirit, as sometimes he tooke the wheelles from *Pharaohs* charriots, downe wee fall presently. How quickly did *Peter* fall, being left unto himselfe?

Secondly the Lord doth this, to humble and abase us to cut our combes, and to coole our courage, who are ready to thinke too jollily of our selves, and to lift up our selves above our brethren, as *Peter* did, who tells *Christ* that hee would  
sticke

sticke fast unto him, though the rest of the Apostles should flinch, and fall off from him; but they stand, when hee falls to his greater shame and deeper humiliation.

3

Thirdly; the Lord doth this to make us the more watchfull over our selves: that we be not too bold or secure, and so through self-confidence and carnall presumption rush upon occasions, and tentations unto evill, as *Peter* did, who would needs adventure into the High Priests Hall, in confidence of his owne strength, where (being left unto himselfe) he fell most shamefully and foully, above the rest of the Apostles.

files, who durst not bee so  
foole-hardy, as to plunge  
themselves into danger  
when they might keepe  
out.

Fourthly, the Lord doth  
this to bring them closer  
unto him, by continuall and  
earnest prayer for the assi-  
stance of his grace, that he  
would stand by them, that  
hee would not leave them  
nor forsake them. The child  
when it hath caught a fall,  
through selfe confidence,  
or letting goe its hold of  
the mother, oh how it will  
cling to the mother, how  
fast it will gripe her finger  
lest being left unto it selfe,  
it fall againe!

Fifthly the Lord doth  
this, to worke in us a ten-  
der-

4

5

Ka<sup>l</sup>apli-  
ze<sup>r</sup>.

der-heartednesse, and compassionate feeling of our brothers frailty and weaknesse that we doe not beare our heads too highly over him; looke too bigly upon him, if his foot hath slipt, and hee by occasion hath falleh into a sinne; but that wee labour to restore him; or set him in againe (as the word imports. *Gal. 6. 1.*) *with the Spirit of meekenesse* considering ourselves, being of the same metall and making; who either have or may in the like manner bee tempted as our brother hath beene.

6

Sixthly and lastly, that so wee may love the Lord the more for restoring of us, and lifting us up when  
we

we were fallen. Now the  
childe of God being for  
these and some such like o-  
ther causes left unto him-  
selfe, and wanting the assi-  
stance of grace, to bring  
him well off from the ten-  
tation into which hee was  
fallen. listens to Satans  
charme, stoopes to his lure,  
untill such time as the Lord  
who hath formerly laid  
earnest for him, returns  
againe with the gracious  
and powerfull presence of  
his Spirit, vindicates his  
owne right, curbs and sub-  
dues the mutinous and e-  
bellious lusts of the flesh,  
sets grace in its seat againe  
to direct and governe the  
whole man: and so the will  
and affections set intune,  
the

the childe of God falls againe to his former course of obedience.

3

Rom. 6. 17.

Thirdly, a gracious heart obeyeth willingly and cheerefully, he yeelds a hartie obedience, *Rom. 6. 17. Ye have obeyed from the heart. Hee loves the Lord withall his heart, withall his soule, withall his strength, as Luk. 10. 27.* There may be an universall obedience (I meane in outward shew and appearance) and yet not a hearty and cheerefull obedience. A servant may goe thorow. stitch with his work, and doe all his taske and yet shucke and grumble, and with his worke were lesse, or of some other kinde, or at some other

ther time appoynted him.  
 So hypocrites may obey,  
 but it is no hearty and  
 cheerefull obedience, but a  
 halting and unwilling wil-  
 lingnesse, if they could tell  
 which way to save their  
 credit, to cōpasse their ends  
 and come fairely off, they  
 would leave off to obey.  
 Whereas a gracious heart  
 performes duties *not by*  
*constraint, but willingly, and*  
*of a ready minde, 1 Pet. 5. 2.*  
 He yeelds himselfe as a ser-  
 vant to obey, *Rom. 6. 16.*  
 Whatsoever good servants  
 doe, they doe (or at least  
 should doe) it cheerefully,  
*Coloss. 3. 13.* without any  
 mumbling or wording, or  
 reasoning the case with  
 their master; which cheere-  
 K fulnesse

1 Pet. 5. 2.

Pro. 23. 26.

fulnesse and willingnesse makes the worke accepted, though there bee many failings, 2 Cor. 8. 12. *If a willing minde. it is accepted according to that a man hath,* &c. therefore seeing the Lord calls for the heart, *Pro. 23. 26.* and measures all obedience by the heart, *For with God the minde is the man;* and it is not the outward action, but the inward intention of the heart which the Lord lookes upon, let us learne to deny our selves, and whatsoever we doe, to doe it heartily; though troubles and crosses doe attend our obedience, to the utmost of our power let us endeavour to bring forth



forth fruit with patience.

A fourth difference lies in sincerity and singlenesse of heart. A good man obeyes for conscience sake, without any respect of any carnall and earthly ends, as *David* exhorted his son, *1 Chron. 28. 9. Salomon, know thou the God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and willing minde.* It is said of *David*, *1 King 3. 6. Hee walked before the Lord in truth and uprightnesse.* Every one that obeyes willingly and checrefully, obeyes not sincerely. *Iehu* was forward enough in fulfilling the command of God, and rooting out *Ahabs* posterity, but hee aymed more

*1 Chron.*  
*28. 9.*

*1 King 3. 6.*

at the setting the crowne upon his owne head, and making sure worke for his posterity after him, than the obeying of Gods word. Whereas a gracious heart hath his conversation in simplicity, not subtilty; in godly purenesse, not dissembled and counterfeited sanctity, or fleshly wisdom. Hee walkes not in craftinesse, but approves himselfe *to every mans conscience in the sight of God,* 2 Cor. 4. 2. Therefore to conclude this point, as we desire any sound evidence to our owne hearts of true grace, let our life be a life of obedience; and that wee may not bee losers in the end by all our obedience, but

2 Cor. 4. 2.

but gainers : looke ( I beseech you ) that your obedience bee rightly qualified ; let it be an entire and perfect obedience , make conscience of all good duties , and that at all times , and in all places , Beware of displeasing God , to please man ; Beware of culling out here and there some good duties to serve thy turne withall : there must be no parting of stakes betwixt God and the devil , betwixt *Christ* and the world. A peace-meale obedience , is in Gods esteeme no better , no other than disobedience , as appeares in *Sauls* killing the Amalekites , and sparing *Agar* , and some of the cattle. To reforme

some things, nay, to conforme in many things, and not in all, is no conformity at all, but deformity. What availes it a man to bee a Saint abroad, and a devill at home? To frequent the assembly of Saints, and to fashion himselfe to the world? To be strict in the duties of religion, and loose in the workes of morality and outward righteousness? Or to walke in a tracke of civility, and to neglect, if not abandon the way of piety? As if holinesse and righteousness were two enemies, and could not accord and agree together? Again, that which thou dost, do with all thy might; and (to make all good) last  
of

of all cast in the salt of sincerity to season all thy doings : doe nothing to bee seene of men , for then thou lovest thy reward with God , who loveth truth in the inward affections, *Psal.* 51.6. and passeth by all outward failings , where the heart is upright before him ; sincerity being a grace which makes all obedience favour well to the Lords palat.

Therefore that thou mayest bee drawne to such a kinde of obedience , consider of these motives :

First , know that untill thou findest thy heart inclined , and thy will framed to this obedience , which I have formerly spoken

K 4

of,

Motives  
unto sound  
obedience.

I

Ioh 15.14.

of, thou art no friend of Christs; *Tee are my friends* (saith Christ) *if ye do whatsoever I command you.* Many can bee content to receive good by Christ, and to account him their Iesus; but few returne love and duty unto Christ, by acknowledging him their Lord, in keeping his Word, obeying his will, and doing whatsoever hee commandeth them.

2

Secondly, thou wantest (as hath been formerly proved) sound evidence of thy regeneratiō, for whom God reneweth, hee sanctifieth throughout; hee fills him with the seeds of righteousness, so as his life is fruitfull in obedience.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, the richer thou art in obedience, the more bountifull will the Lord be in rewarding. He that gained five talents, had the rule over five Cities: *For every one shall receive according to his worke, Rom. 2.6.*

Fourthly and lastly, this will procure (as you shall heare by and by) outward prosperitie; it will fetch in a rich portion of outward benefits and blessings, *Esay 1. 19. If yee bee willing, and obey, yee shall eat the good things of the Land.*

Now then, to draw to a conclusion of this point; seeing you have heard of these evidences of true grace; let me in the bowels of the Lord Iesus beseech

you my brethren , to goe home to your owne hearts , make there a diligent scrutiny and narrow search , whether you finde these evidences in your possession , or not. Are the eyes of your understanding enlightened with saving knowledge ? Is thy knowledge rightly qualified ? Is it practicall , or is it meerely theoricall ? is it a transforming knowledge moulding thee to the Word ? Is it such a knowledge as vents it selfe continually for the glory of God , and the good of others ? Dost thou find thy heart , by beleeving , knit unto God through Christ , loving him , and fearing him for his



his owne sake , as well as  
for his Christs sake ? Dost  
thou find the throat of thy  
corruption cut in thee , and  
thy sins bleeding to death,  
and gasping in thee ? Is thy  
heart set against every evill  
way , and thy soule deligh-  
ted in the practice of that  
which is good ? doth thy  
heart stoope to **G O D S**  
Word , and thou yeeld up  
thy selfe to bee at his com-  
mand , and that willingly ,  
cheerefully , and in singler-  
nes of heart fearing God ?  
Then blessed bee the time  
that ever thou wert made  
acquainted with these high  
prerogatives ; **G O D** hath  
done more for thee , than if  
(wanting these) he had put  
upon thee all the honour ,  
pompe,

pompe , and glory of the world. But woe and alas , how few are there in whom these evidences are to bee found ! Oh that such as want them , had but eyes to see their misery , and hearts to consider how full of unconceivable horror their consciences will one day bee , when they come to be awakened , & perceive how they have trifled away the day of grace , turned the grace of God into wantonnesse , received the grace of God in vaine , so as they have no part in the inheritance either of grace , or of glory ! Know and beleewe (deare brethren) that things will not alwayes stand at this stay with you. A day is

is comming, wherein yee must lay down these earthly tabernacles of yours, and with them all your pleasures, profits and honours, when none of all these will stand you in any stead, or affoord you any comfort, but will rather (wanting grace to use them aright) increase your grieve and sorrow. A day will come, wherein (if these evidences be not in thee) thy conscience will not spare to tell thee to thy face, that (wanting grace) thou art a vessel of wrath, ordained and prepared for destruction. Oh the troubles, sorrowes and feares, into which (in that day) thy poore soule will bee plunged for want of

of grace ! Oh what wouldest thou not then give for one dram of grace ? How happy wouldest thou take thy selfe to be, if thou hadst but a little time to redeeme wherein thou mightest come to partake of the meanes of grace , which formerly thou hast fligh-  
ted over, making no more account of them than of thine old shooes ? Thou wilt then cease to wonder at Gods faithfull Ministers so inveighing against the neglect of grace, and so vehemently pressing and urging the necessitie thereof. Thou wilt then say , that a little grace were more worth than all the world beside , and that they are  
onely

onely happy that doe partake of it. Whereas the childe of God having tasted of Gods goodnesse, and made partaker of his grace, is filled with unconceivable joy and comfort, finding himselfe delivered from the power of darke-nesse, and translated into the Kingdome of Iesus Christ. His conscience being purged from dead workes by the bloud of Christ, and his heart purified by faith, hee can looke death in the face, take him by the hand, and bid him welcome; he can lye down & rest in peace, and in full assurance (or if any doubtings through Satans malice doe arise, in hope) of eternall

eternall life through Iesus Christ. And this shall suffice to have spoken of the evidences of true grace. I now come (according to the method & order which in the beginning I propounded) to lay downe some grounds and reasons, *why Grace is the best thing we can partake of.*

The first  
reason.

First, because it is the onely thing which gives content to the heart and minde of a Christian, in every estate and condition whatsoever God hath placed him. Contentment is the thing which every one aymes at, and desires in all his courses. Why doe men toile and moile in the world earely and late,

ate, thorow thicke and  
thinne, but to satisfie  
their minde in these out-  
ward riches? Why doe  
peop'e follow, and with  
unwearied and unlimited  
desires and affections, hunt  
after the honors and plea-  
sures of this world, but to  
satisfie their desires, and (as  
they suppose) to give them-  
selves content? But this is  
a meere imposture of our  
wicked heart, falsly think-  
ing that our desires are  
satisfied with desiring,  
when as (the truth is) they  
are increased. Why doe  
men and women decke and  
adorne (as they thinke,  
whereas indeed they de-  
forme) their bodies with  
strange attire, with costly  
orna-

Esa. 55. 2.

ornaments, but to give themselves content, and to please their mindes? For if you aske them a reason of their practice, they will tell you it is their pleasure so to doe. But they deceive themselves, in looking for content in worldly things, or to bee satisfied with them, as appears *Esa. 55. 2. Wherefore doe you spend money for that which is not bread? and labour for that which satisfieth not?* Is it possible that vanitie, and vexation of spirit, should give content to the heart of man? All things under the Sunne are no better, no other than vanity, if wee will beleeeve the Preacher, *Eccles. 1. 14. Onely grace*  
is



is that living water, or water of life, of which whosoever drinks, shal never thirst, *John. 4. 14.*

*Ioh. 4. 14.*

Grace teacheth us in every estate and condition to be content, *Phil. 4. 11.* We can be abased, and we can abound, we can be full and wee can bee hungry; Gods grace is enough and sufficient for us, able to supply all defects, and to fulfill all our necessities. But if grace be absent, the minde is full of blindnesse, the heart is fraught with wickednesse, and the conscience perplexed with guiltinesse; the flesh, the world and the Devill doe there lord it; and what content or rest can there be, where  
such

*Phil. 4. 11.*

such lords of mis-rule doe rule and beare sway ? It is grace which repaires Gods Image in the soule of a Christian; now the more like we are to God in holinesse and righteousness, the more will the heart bee satisfied, and contented through the apprehension of the love of God. *I will behold thy face in righteousness, and when I awake I shall be satisfied with thine Image, Psal. 17. 15.* Let a man have all the riches, and honours which the world can afford him, yet untill grace be wrought in him, untill the Image of God be renewed in him, hee will have a restlesse and unquiet heart, *There is no peace*

peace, saith God unto the wicked, *Esay 57. 21.* What content or rest can that man have which is under the wrath and displeasure of the Lord? untill grace bee infused we are enemies unto God, and he an enemy unto us, *Col. 1. 21.* But grace assures us that we are reconciled unto God, and that we have his love which giveth more content to the heart, and filleth it with more joy, than the riches and abundance of the world can, *Psal. 4. 5, 7.*

But doth every gracious heart finde, and feele this contentment and joy you speake of?

Not alwayes for oft time through Satans malice

*Object.*

*Answer.*

lice and subtilty, it comes to passe that the childe of God in time of tentation is much perplexed, so as there is no rest within him, hee is tumbled and tossed up and downe with feares and cares; hee will question the truth of Gods promise, belie the worke of the Spirit, and say there is no grace in him. Hee will tell you that all his former forwardnesse and profession, hath beene hypocriticall and counterfeit and that his joy and rejoycing in the Lord was but Satanicall illusion, or vaine confidence. But grace will one day blow over this blacke cloud, for *light is sowne for the righteous and joy for the upright in heart,*  
*Psal.*

*Psal. 97. 11.*

Againe, it is through the strength and power of grace that wee are able to hold up our heads in any storme of trouble and affliction; that wee are not swallowed up of tentations that we are not in distresse, when we are afflicted; that in poverty, wee are not overcome of poverty, and that we perish not when we are cast downe: we are able to doe all things through the helpe of Christ which strengthens us, *Phil. 4. 13.* Many a deare childe of God, in the agony of his soule, through the heat and pressure of some hot and heavy affliction, is ready to cry out, Never man troubled

The second Reason.

*Phil. 4. 13.*

Lam. 1. 12.

bled and crossed as I am: complaining as the Church  
*Lam. 1. 12. Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto mee: thus is hee ready to sinke under his burthen, were hee not supported by the grace of God, who being faithfull, will not suffer his to be tempted above that which they are able to beare, but will give the issue with the temptation, that they may be able to beare it, 1 Cor. 10.*

1 Cor. 10.

13.

Esa. 40. 31.

13. Though weake and weary of themselves, yet the Lord will renue their strength, they shall lift up their wings as the Eagles: they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walke, and not bee faint, Esay 40. 31.

Grace

Grace upholds them in, and carrieth them thorow every triall and affliction whatsoever. In wrongs and injuries it makes a man to sit downe without revenge: in afflictions, to lay his hand upon his mouth, and not repine and murmure, but to bee as a man dumbe: in every paine to apply some plaster for ease and comfort. Though the strength of grace, the soundnesse of the heart supports the weaknesse of the body; so that when the outward man fainteth and faileth, the inward is renewed more and more.

Thirdly, it is grace which (as hath been sufficiently proved before) teacheth

L

cheth

The third Reason.

cheth and helpeth a man to live godly, and to walke in the wayes of godlinesse, which in regard of the manifold lets and discouragements within us, and without us (without grace) can never be effected. The way of vertue is very hard, in regard of our manifold weakenesses, wanting strength to wade thorow the difficulties, and passe over the rubs which lye in a Christians race: weaknesse of judgement and understanding in the duties of piety, rightly to discern which coast the right way bendeth: weaknesse of will and affection to take the right way, when it is prescribed unto us: weaknesse  
of



of ability to move one foot forward in the way, much lesse able to encounter with those difficulties, which (through the allurements of the world, and the subtilty of that old Serpent, and rage and malice of the Dragon ) will bee laid before us : and last of all, weaknesse in regard of perseverance, and continuall progresse in our journey. Whence it falls out, that many prove idle loyterers, which not only make many baits and pauses iu their way, but at last fall short and take up their rest before they come to their journeyes end : Against all which weaknesse; it is only grace that affords a Chri-

Ier. 32. 40.

istian strength, and enables him to continue to the end; as appeares, *Ierem. 32. 40.* and *Ezek. 36. 27.* and to *runne with patience the race that is set before us, Heb. 12. 1.*

The forth Reason.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Deut. 5. 29.

Fourthly grace brings in outward and temporall benefits: the surest and the speediest way to get goods, is, to get goodnesse. For, *Godlineffe hath the promise of this, and of another life, 1 Tim. 4. 8.* When the children of Israel had professed their obedience to the Lord, *Deut. 5. 29.* the Lord replies to *Moses, O that there were in them such hearts to keep my Commandments alwayes, that it might goe well with them: not only in*

in respect of their soules,  
but their bodies also ; as  
*Moses* told them afterward,  
*Deut. 28. 1. If thou diligent-  
ly obey the voyce of the Lord,  
and observe and doe all his  
Commandements : Then as  
it followeth, Thou shalt be  
blessed in the City, blessed in  
the field, &c. So Esay 1. 19.  
If yee consent and obey, yee  
shall eat the good things of  
the Land. Grace paves a  
way to outward prosperi-  
ty. Hence *Prov. 3. 16, 17.*  
it is said of *Wisdome*, *That  
length of daies are in her  
right hand, and in her left  
riches and glory, her wayes  
are the waies of pleasure, and  
all her pathes prosperity :*  
What else was implied by  
that speech of our Saviour,*

*Pro. 3. 16.  
17.*

*Matth. 6. 33. First seeke the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, and all these things shall be ministred unto you. Outward blessings attend upon grace as its appurtenances: get grace, and be sure of these. This may seeme 'a paradox to many, and ordinary experience (some will say) teacheth us the contrary.*

*object.*

*For, first of all, doe we not oft see, the piety and poverty goe hand in hand, that many gracious people abounding in goodnesse, have but a poore pittance, of outward goods? And on the other side, is there not many a devill incarnate that is clad in purple and scarlet, fares deliciously every*

every day, and hath more than enough? *Loe* (saves David, *Psal* 73. 12.) *these are the wicked, they prosper and increase in riches.* *Psa. 72. 12.*

For answer to both these *Ans.* Objections, know first, that the promise of temporall good things is but conditionall; when they are expedient for us, when they may bee furtherances, and not coolers of grace in his children. The Lord doth all things by weight and measure; all his workes are done in wisdom and righteousness. It may bee the Lord sees that riches beginne to steale away the hearts of his children, and therefore he will withdraw riches from them; for the

Lord is a jealous God : if once hee beginne to see us dote upon , or to delight in the things of this world more than in him , hee will cut us short of them , as hee dealt with *Ionas* , who tooke too much content in his Gourd , and therefore the Lord smites it , that it withered , *Ionas* 4. 17. Or it may bee , the Lord withdrawes outward benefits , that so wee may see their vanitie , how changeable and flitting they are , and therefore will have us to minde riches more durable , and labour for the food that perisheth not , and for the bag that will never wax old , *Luk.* 12. 33. Or else the Lord takes from us temporall riches ,  
to

to bestow upon us spiritu-  
all good things, which hee  
sees will not thrive nor  
prosper, where the other  
are. Or it may bee hee sees  
wee are not able to manage  
outward riches, but would  
do some harme with them,  
grow proud, contentious,  
and quarrellsome, or fall to  
some excesse and intempe-  
rance by them; and there-  
fore as wee deale with a  
child who had a staffe or  
a sword in his hand, take it  
from him lest he hurt him-  
selfe, or some other with  
it: so deales the Lord with  
his children. Or if none  
of all these, it may bee the  
Lord takes away these  
outward benefits, sets fire  
upon the hedge which is

Iob 1. 21.

about his children, to make knowne the truth of grace in them, that the Devill and all the world may see and know, their service to God is not mercenary, but that they can love, & feare, and obey him as well in the want, as in the plentie of these outward things; yea, and blesse God, taking from them as well as giving unto them, *Iob 1. 21.* For (as you heard) grace fits their minds to their estate, so as they can bee empty as well as abound; therefore that little which they have, being sanctified and seasoned with grace, *is better than great riches to the wicked, Psal. 37. 16.*

Againe, whereas you  
object



object that many wicked and gracelesse people have a greater portion of these outward things than Gods deare children; It is not that *God regardeth the rich more than the poore*, *Iob 34.*

*Iob 34. 19.*

*19.* but deales with them, as it is said King *Entreples* did with his enemies whom he most hated; heaps most riches upon them, thereby to plunge them into tentations and snares; to fill them with many foolish and noysome lusts, that so they may pierce themselves thorow with many sorrowes, *1 Tim.*

*1 Tim. 6. 9.*

*10.*

*6. 9, 10.* God oft-times gives honours and riches to the wicked in his wrath, as hee gave *Quailes* to the *Israelites*, so that *their table is*

Psal. 69. 22.

*a snare before them, and their prosperity their ruine, Psal.*

69. 22. Grieve not therefore at the seeming happiness and prosperitie of gracelesse persons, for whatsoever they have; they hold in a wrong tenure, they have it with a curse, and they must bee called to after-reckonings for it. Only grace sanctifies things present, and paves away for future benefits. If there were no more arguments to prove the worth of grace, one thinkes this should enhance the esteeme thereof, even amongst worldlings. Would they be rich? Would they have possessions behinde them to their posterity? I know no better

ter way than grace. I have  
beene young, and am old: yet  
saw I never the righteous for-  
saken, nor his seed begging  
bread, Psal. 37. 25. Blessed  
is the man that feareth the  
Lord, and delighteth greatly  
in his Commandements. His  
seed shall bee mightie upon  
earth: the generation of the  
righteous shall bee blessed,  
Psa. 112. 1, 2. and what fol-  
lowes after in the third  
verse? Riches and treasures  
shall be in his house.

Psal 37. 25.

Psal. 112.  
1, 2, 3.

Fifthly, it is only grace  
which makes up Decayes  
and defects in Nature,  
which all the things in the  
world cannot doe. Art  
may helpe Nature, and in  
some particulars perfect  
Nature, but it is only grace  
which

The fifth  
Reason.

which makes up the breaches and decays thereof. When a man hath lived to that age and fulnesse of dayes, that his head and armes doe dodder through weaknesse, his knees and thighes doe buckle under him, as unable to support his unwieldy body: when age and time have worn out the edge and backe of his sense, so that his eyes wax dimme, as did *Isaac's*, hee hath no more taste in his meat and drinke than had *Barzillai*, and hee can no more distinguish the voyce of singing or any melodie, if grace bee in the heart, notwithstanding all these decays in Nature, he flourisheth in his age, *Psal.*

92. 12. The righteous shall flourish like a Palme-tree, & shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon, verse 14. They shall still bring forth fruit in their age, they shall be fat and flourishing. The righteous will hold his way, and hee whose hands are pure, shall increase his strength, Job 17. 9. not of nature, but of grace, which supplies the defects of nature.

Psa. 92. 12.

Job 17. 9.

He hath his eyes of faith, to see the excellencie of a holy life, to see the happinesse of his estate. He hath the hands of faith, to clasp about the promises, to take Christ into his heart, as *Si-  
meon* took him into his armes. Hee hath eares open, or if Nature hath played her  
part

part in them, and they can receive no more; hee hath an heart open, to heare what the Lord shall speake to his soule by his Holy Spirit. His taste is fresh and lively, he findes sweetnesse in the holy ordinances of God, more than in the riches, pleasures, and delicates of the whole world. Nay which is more, though his grinders cease, and the doores bee shut without by the base sound of the grindings, as Eccles. 12. 3, 4. he can heartily feed upon the body and bloud of the Lord Iesus Christ; and when they wax darke that looke out by the windows, verse 3. hee can (without going up to Pisgah,

gah, as *Moses* did ) behold the Land of Canaan; nay, more than so, hee can looke Death in the face, long for him, as for a treasure, and desire to lay downe his earthly tabernacle, and bee with the Lord Christ. Tell me then if all the art, riches or pompe of the world is able to doe thus much; no, no, it is the onely prerogative & priviledge of grace, to supply these naturall wants.

Sixthly, it is onely grace that gives us a sanctified use of all those things wee doe partake of; for whatsoever it bee that any one doth enjoy and possesse, if hee bee a gracelesse person; all these things (good in them-

The sixth Reason.

1 Tim. 4.5.

themselves) will prove curses and snares unto him, and such as will further his condemnation in the day of Iudgement. It is Grace which must sanctifie all parts of Nature, all endowments and gifts of body and minde: The strength of *Goliath*, the valour of *Ioab*, the beautie of *Absalom*, the wisdom of *Achitophel*, eloquence of *Herod*, the honour and promotion of *Haman*, and the riches of *Dives*; all these were but snares, thornes, and curses to the possessours of them, for want of grace to qualifie, to sanctifie them.

The seventh  
Reason.

Seventhly and lastly, herein appeares the excellencie of grace, in that  
it



it paves the way, and bringeth us unto glory. Grace is the first fruits of glory, and as it were the earnest of our eternall inheritance: for all the gifts of grace bestowed upon us here, do tend and make for the fitting, and preparing of us for glory hereafter. Grace never finally or totally forsakes a man, but brings him at last to that eternall inheritance, lands him in the end in heaven, his desired haven. There be many things of good use and worth, which are no lasting things, there be many things both delightfull and precious but yet fading; onely grace herein hath its precedencie and excellencie

Παλιγ-  
νισια, so  
taken.  
TITUS. 3. 5.

lency above all earthly things, it never wholly leaves us, but prepares us and brings us unto glory. Grace is heaven upon earth: and therefore they which follow Christ in the regeneration, shall sit in the throne of glory, *Mat. 19. 28.*

Grace prepares us for glory two manner of wayes:

First, by removing those evils which may hinder us.

And secondly, by enabling of us to practise those good things which may further us. *The grace of God which bringeth salvation unto al men, hath appeared, and teacheth us that we should*

should deny ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts, and that wee ſhould live ſoberly, and righteouſly and godly in this preſent world, looking for the bleſſed hope, &c. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13. Whether you underſtand here by grace, the Word of grace, as ſome doe, or the free grace of God, as others take it, I am ſure it is true alſo of the grace of ſanctification; for this helpeth us to eſchew evill, and to chooſe and cleave to that which is good. As it is in the lightning of any darke place; darkeneſſe gives way, when light approcheth; ſo when grace commeth into the ſoule, away (in part) goes darkeneſſe and blindnes of minde

A<sup>g</sup>m 6. 18.

Grace brings glory  
 over sin

minde, ignorance, impie-  
 tie, prophannesse, &c. Paul  
 telleth us that he was sent  
 to preach unto the Gen-  
 tiles, *To turne them from  
 darknesse to light and from  
 the power of Satan unto God.*  
 Such as live in darkenesse  
 under the power of any  
 one sinne, those know not  
 what the powerfull pre-  
 sence of grace meaneth.  
 Grace pulls downe sinne,  
 and sets up righreousnesse,  
*Rom. 5. 21. Grace reignes  
 by righteousnesse.* It holds  
 up the Scepter of Christ  
 within us, helps us to bee  
 holy in all manner of con-  
 versation ; and so having  
 our *fruit in holinesse*, wee  
*come in the end to everlasting*  
*life, Rom. 6. 22.* O the ex-  
 cellency

cellency of grace, that it thus brings us to glory!

Let this comfort us against that comfortlesse doctrine of falling away from grace. Consider wee from whom grace proceeds, even from God the Father; and will not God perfect the worke of his owne hands?

*I am perswaded that hee that hath begun this good worke in you, will performe it untill the day of Iesus Christ, Phil.*

*1. 6. The gifts of God are without repentance, Rom. 11.*

*29. The righteous shall never bee moved, but had in everlasting remembrance, Psal. 112. 6.*

But wee are weake and feeble, we have strong corruptions within us, and mighty

*Grace makes us godly.*

*Object.*

mighty and subtile tentations without us, and therefore like to fall away.

*Answ.*

True, if there were not an higher power, and a stronger arme than our owne to support us. Our helpe standeth in the name of the Lord. We are strong in the power of his might, *For it is God which stablisheth us in Christ, and hath annointed us, 2 Cor. 1. 21.* Our stability is derived from God the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost.

The grounds of our stability which we fetch from God, are these:

First, the promises of God, *Ier. 24. 7. I will give them an hart to know mee,*  
that

that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be there God. So Ier. 32. 40. I will put my feare into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Now to say that these are generall promises made unto the whole Church and therefore not to be appropriated to particular persons, will be but a silly evasion: For doth not the whole consist of particular members? And doe not we finde in Scripture, promises made to particular persons generally applyed, and likewise generall promises particularly applyed? The Lord made a particular promise unto Iosua 1. 9. I will not faile thee, nor forsake thee.

M

Which

Which promise *S. Paul. Hebr. 13. 5.* applyes generally. Other instances there bee.

2

Secondly, we approve it from the attributes of God; his power, his faithfulnessse and constancy. If any of those whom the Lord hath effectually called, should utterly fall from grace and perish, it must needs follow, that God wants either power to save those whom hee would, or else wants faithfulnessse to save as hee hath promised; either of which wants, the devils themselves dare not avouch to bee in God.

Concerning his power, the Lord himselfe tells us, *Esay 43. 13. I will doe it, and who*



who shall let? Again, Esa. 46  
10. My counsell shall stand,  
and I will doe whatsoever I  
will. Christ also tells us,  
Ioh. 10. My Father which  
gave them me, is greater than  
all, and none is able to take  
them out of my Fathers hand.  
For, saies Peter, we are kept  
by the power of God through  
faith unto salvation, 1 Pet.  
1. 5.

Esa. 43. 13.

Esa. 46. 10.

Ioh. 10. 29

And for his faithfulnessse  
that Wizard Balaam could  
say, Numb. 23. 19. God is  
not as man, that hee should  
lie, neither as the son of man,  
that he should repent: hath  
hee said it, and shall hee  
not doe it? and he hath spo-  
ken and shall hee not accom-  
plish it? Yes surely, for the  
Lord is faithfull which will

Numb. 23.  
19.

*stablish you, and keepe you from evill, 2 Thesse. 3. 3.*

The Lord purposing to frame unto himselfe a Church, against which the gates of hell should never be able to prevaile, thought it fit to lay the foundation of it deepe and strong, even in himselfe, his owne purpose. Things many times decay and perish for want of a firme and good foundation. *But the foundation of God (saith Paul) remaineth sure, 2 Tim. 2. 19.* So that untill such time as God doth alter his purpose, which shall never be, for as *Malac. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not : Gods children are sure to persever in his grace : For whom hee once loves,*

*2 Tim. 2.  
19.*

*Mal. 3. 6.*

loves, to the end hee loveth them, Ioh. 13. 1.

Secondly, assurance of perseverance in the grace of God, may be gathered from many things in the Sonne.

First, from his al-sufficiency, Hebr. 7. 25. Hee is able perfectly to save all those that come to God by him. Iud. 24. To him that is able to keep you that you fall not, and to present you faultlesse, &c. As he is able, so is he willing, Ioh. 6. 37 and 40.

H. b. 7. 25.

Iude 24.

Secondly, from the vertue of his passion and sufferings Hebr. 10. 14. For with one offering hath he consecrated for ever them that are sanctified.

Heb. 10. 14.

Thirdly, from the efficacy

Ioh. 17. 25.

Heb. 7. 25.

cace of his prayer, which God alwaies heares. Christ prayed for all beleevers, *Ioh. 17.* first, that *the Lord would keepe them from evil* vers. 15. and secondly, *That they may bee one with him,* vers. 21. and thirdly, *That they may bee with him, and behold his glory.* vers. 24. And this prayer the Lord Christ our Advocate still continues, though not in a vocall manner, *seeing hee ever liveth to make intercession for us,* Heb. 7. 25. These things considered, it is as possible to plucke Christ out of his kingdome, as to rent the poorest beleever from him, once made a true and lively member of his mysticall body.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, wee prove it from the nature and office of the Spirit, which is to seale up, and make sure the inheritance of Gods chosen. All that partake of the covenant of grace, are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, Ephes. 1. 13. which sealing is not for a day, a moneth, or a yeare, but for ever, unto the day of redemption, Ephes. 4. 30. The nature of a Seale (all know) is to make things sure. The decree of the Medes and Persians, that it might bee irrevocable, was sealed with the Kings seale, Dan. 6. 8. Lest the Disciples should come by night and steale Christ out of the sepulchre wherein hee was  
M 4                      laid,

Epl. 1. 13.

Ephes. 4. 30.

Dan. 6. 8.

Mar. 27. 66.

laid, *They went and made the sepulchre sure, and sealed the stone, Math. 27. 66.* When wee have put our seale to a writing, by the law of Nations it is firme. Shall the Seale of a mortall man bee of that force, that no law can alter it; and shall the obsignation of the holy Spirit bee of lesse vertue and power? This were to make God lesse than man.

Eph. 1. 14.

Againe, it is the earnest *of our inheritance, untill the redemption of the possession purchased unto the praise of his glory.* Now the nature of an earnest (wee know) is to binde any contract or bargaine, and to give a kind of state, and possession of the

the thing bargained for. Gods Spirit is his earnest which hee hath laid for his, to assure the hearts of his children, of their full possession of that inheritance which Christ hath purchased, and God hath prepared for them.

Now if any shall object, that wee may either lose or forfeit our earnest, and so misse of the bargaine: you must know that the Spirit of God doth never finally and wholly depart from those unto whom it is once given, as appeares, *loh. 14. 16, 17.*

But had not *David* lost the Spirit of God, when he prayed so earnestly unto the Lord, that hee would

*Object.*

M 5 restore

Psa. 51. 12.

*Ans.*

restore unto him the joy of his salvation, and stablish him with his free Spirit?

This objection may be said to answer it selfe. Could *David*, without the presence and assistance of the Spirit, have beene thus earnest with the Lord in prayer?

Againe, a difference must be put betwixt the presence of the Spirit, and the feeling or comfort of the Spirit. A hand benumbed with cold, or stunted with some blow, may hold a thing, and yet have no feeling of it. It doth not follow, that (therefore) Gods Spirit hath utterly forsaken a man, because in his apprehension and feeling  
he



hee takes it to be so. Therefore in stead of perplexing and troubling thy selfe about needlesse feares of rejection and finall falling from grace, labour to bee furnished with sound evidences of true grace; and then (my life for thine) God, *who hath begunne a good worke in thee, will confirme it untill the day of Iesus Christ,* Phil. 1. 6.

Phil. 1. 6.

Here some wake beleever may reply, and say; If I had as good a heart as many have; or if I were indowed with as much grace as some bee, I should then have lesse feare, and more hope of holding out unto the end; but (alas) I am a poore sinfull creature,  
full

Object.

full of frailties, and compassed about with manifold infirmities, and therefore feare my selfe.

*Ans.*

*Mat. 11. 20.*

For thy comfort, thou must know, that Gods grace is sufficient for thee, and his power is made perfect through weaknesse, it is not the greatnesse, but the truth of grace which the Lord respects, *A bruised reed shall hee not breake, and smoking flax shall he not quench, untill he bring forth judgement unto victory.* If grace in thee bee sound and true, though it bee no more than a graine of mustard-seed, it shal be able to bring thee unto glory.

*Object.*

It may bee so if I could beleeeve this, but I cannot be

be fully periwaded of this thing.

If thou beleeve not, yet *abideth God faithfull*, he cannot deny himselfe, as the Apostle sayes, *2 Tim. 2. 13.*

*Answ.*

Let no man, from this which hath beene spoken, grow secure and carelesse, as if he were out of all feare and danger of losing his comfort, or lessening that grace which he hath received. For though it be true, that true grace cannot bee utterly lost, yet through pride, securitie, earthly-mindednesse, and the like, the childe of God may fall into such languishing fits, that the life of grace may appeare to bee utterly extinct in him.

Suppose

Suppose our bodies were of that temper and constitution, that no poison or infection could make a rent betwixt the soule & them; were it not folly, nay were it not madnesse for any one to cut and wound himselfe, or through mis-dieting of himselfe, and surfets, so to impaire his strength and health, that his life should bee a continuall faintnesse and sicknesse. Even so it is with us, in respect of grace, the life of our soules, for that soule which is destitute of grace, is dead whiles it liveth, as appears *1 Tim.*

*1 Tim. 5. 6.*

5. 6. What though grace once seazing upon the soule, cannot be wholly separated from it? yet may it through

through our spirituall distempers take such a surfet, as little strength, or power thereof may ever appeare in us. For wee dare not denie but that the childe of G O D may fall foully, both in doctrine and manners, both in opinion and practice. First, hee may fall into grievous and grosse errors, not onely such as doe weaken and shake, but even such as doe overturne the foundation, overthrow faith. But here wee must put a difference betwixt the errors of the Elect, and the errors of the reprobate. If the child of God doth erre fundamentally, it is out of humane fragilitie and weakenesse, or though  
the

the subtiltie of taile teachers who by strength of argumēt & wit have borne him downe for the present, as the Galatians fell into a fundamental error, holding justification by works, and joining the ceremoniall law with Christ: but such of them as belonged to the election of grace, were (no doubt) brought out of their error, and received the love of the truth that they might bee saved. Whereas reprobate ones, *holting the truth in unrighteousnesse*, have strong delusions sent them to beleve lies, that they all might be damned that beleve not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousnesse, 2 Theff. 2. 11. 12.

Second.

Secondly, the childe of God may fall foully in his manners, and practice.

Hee may estrange himselfe from such of Gods people, as take up a stricter course of life, than he likes well of. In stead of applauding or approving their holy course and practice he may fall to censuring, if not downe right condemning of it. Such of the godly as hee hath formerly revered and embraced, taking them into his armes and bosome for godlinesse sake, he may now bawke & shun, or looke asquint upon them; because they favour him not in some unrighteous course, or will not joyne with him in some evill

evill , unbeseeming their holy profession.

Hee may also distaste a faithfull and powerfull Ministerie , especially if it fall upon those sins where-with hee is now pleased. And whereas (of old) neither way nor weather could keepe him from Gods house ; his heart being so sharpe set upon hearing , that hee thought it a sinne to misse a Sermon ; now every small occasion is a lyon in his way ; hee is now more wise and provident ( hee thinks ) than to mispend his time in running after preachers ; hee now begins to loath that *Manna* which was once more sweet to his soule than



than his appointed food.

Besides he may not only thus fall from his former zeale and strictnesse, but hee may fall into a fearefull loosenesse : for whereas once hee hated all appearance of evill, lothed the very garment spotted with the flesh, not bearing with any sinne, or sinners ; he is now for all society, for all talke, for any service, good or bad, godly or profane, all is fish that comes to his net ; though of the two, he gives the right hand of fellowship to him whom they call good fellow.

Besides the gifts and graces of the Spirit may not onely be cooled, but in a manner extinct in him :  
Whereas

Whereas hee sometime made it his constant course and practice, not only with his family, but also alone by himselfe, to spend some time of the day in praying, reading, &c. yea, and with that joy and affection, as if holy exercises had beene the very joy, and rejoycing of his soule. In his prayers you might have seene him like *Jacob* wrestling with God, as if he resolved not to give the Lord over until he had got a blessing from him. But now seldome, or not at all will serve the turne of these holy duties, his hands are heavy, that he can hardly lift them up unto the Lord. And last of all hee may fall into such grosse.

grosse, and grievous finnes,  
as if grace were utterly ex-  
tinguished in him, and even swal-  
lowed up of corruption;  
yea, hee may fall into pre-  
sumptuous finnes; he may  
wittingly, willingly, and  
willfully fall into sione,  
and for a while bee under  
the dominion of presump-  
tuous finnes, from which  
the Prophet *David* prayed  
that he might be kept, *Psal.*  
19. 13.

Which condition is  
fearefull for any childe of  
God to fall into, not onely  
in regard of others, but es-  
pecially in regard of him-  
selfe.

It is fearefull in regard  
of others, both good and  
bad. The godly they grieve  
and

and mourne at the hearing, or seeing, of any such woful declension in one that hath made profession of godlineffe, their hearts are pierced, and wounded, that it should bee thus with any one that hath given better hopes, or professed better things.

The wicked, of the other side, they either spue out their venome against godlineffe, and blasphemie downe-right all the Lords people, saying, Such they are all, these are your Professors; or else they triumph, and rejoyce at his fall, as if they had obtained some spoyle, or victorie.

But this condition is a  
great

grace deale more feareful  
in respect of himselfe that  
is thus fallen. For though  
the Lord doe not take away  
his loving kindnesse from  
him, nor falsifie his truth;  
yet *may hee visite his trans-*  
*gressions with a rod, and his*  
*iniquities with strokes, Psal.*  
89. 32. The Lord may ex-  
ercise him with many hea-  
vie and fearefull bodily  
judgements, so as he shall  
end his dayes in some out-  
ward wo, and misery: or if  
not ( which is a great deale  
worse ) the *L O R D* may  
with-draw from him the  
sweet comforts, and gra-  
cious presence of his holy  
Spirit, spoile his soule of  
the joyes of salvation, so as  
he shall never be able to re-  
cover

cover againe his former happy condition in many particulars. And which is worst of all, and most fearefull and dreadfull to thinke of, God may strike his heart with feare, and horror of eternall wrath and vengeance, possesse his soule with hellish despare, so that through the violence of tentation, hee may end his dayes in a lamentable manner. Thus the Lord may make him a spectacle to Angels and men, that all others that heare of this may dread and feare to turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, or to grieve his sweet and holy Spirit. Therefore  
that

that no man may bee settled upon the lees of security, or sing a *requiem* unto his owne soule, consider daily what strength and life is in that grace which God hath bestowed upon thee; lest before thou bee st aware of it, grace bee cooled and declining in thee; which if it be, will appeare by these symptomes.

The first is an inordinate appetite unto such things as are noxious and hurtfull unto the soule. For, as our bodily health is impaired and weakened, by feeding upon such things as are in antipathy unto our nature and constitution; so it fares with our soules, if we be bold with sinne the soule  
N bane,

I  
Sym-  
tomes of  
declining  
in grace.

hane, the strength of grace growes quickly feeble in us.

2

The second is the abaiting of our spirituall taste ; when wee finde not the sweetnesse and comfort in the Word, which formerly wee have done ; when wee feede not upon the Word with that desire and appetite which once wee did, this argues some distemper in the soule. For as in bodily meates, when they grow unfavoury to our palats, it is most evident that our stomacks have in them some distemper : so it is with our soules ; if the same Word have not the same rellish with us now, whi ch



which sometime it had, we may say there is some spirituall distemper.

Thirdly, when we brook not, when wee digest not the Word as well as formerly we have done. Evill concoction of our meet argues a cold stomacke, or at least an abatement of the native heat: so when people digest not Gods Word, the food of their soules, but vomit it up againe, either by storming against it, censuring of it, or wilfully neglecting the power and practice of it, it is a signe of declining in grace.

3

Fourthly and lastly, if there bee a cold, drowisie, and formall performance of the duties of Gods wor-

4

ship and service : when a man is not so cheerefull and lively unto and in good duties, as of old ; this argues a decaying of his spirituall strength. As in bodily labour, when a man begins to give in, when there is not that strength and power in his <sup>\*</sup>Armes, Legges and Backe, which sometimes hath beene, wee see, and say, Nature is debilitated and weakened in such a man ; even so, when wee performe not holy duties with that zeale and spirituall vigour ( though it may bee with lesse strength of body, the Organes being decayed, through age or sicknesse ) which formerly wee have done, wee may  
feare

feare grace is in some declension.

But is there no hope, no helpe to recover out of this spirituall relapse. Yes, for howsoever it be a g ievous spectacle to behold a Christian so decayed in grace, and it should cause him that is thus fallen, to lament and bewaile his condition ( if it were possible ) with teares of bloud ; yet whiles there is life there is hope, and to keep such from despaire God hath left examples ( in his word ) of his deere children, most holy men, that have runne so far behind-hand, as if they had spent all grace, and all former gifts of sanctification were even blasted in

them, which yet have again recovered grace before they died. Know therefore, thou that art thus decayed in grace, that there is a possibility for thee to strengthen that which remaines, and is ready to dye, if thou wilt speedily set upon those helpes which shall be prescribed for thy recovery: which are these.

First of all, thy soule must bee deeply afflicted with Godly sorrow, with sound and unfained humiliation and repentance; for great sinnes must be greatly repented of. This humiliation of thine must not be the hanging downe of thy head for a day like a bull-rush, but if it be possible, let thy

thy teares runne downe like  
a river, day and night: take  
thee no rest, neither let the  
apple of thine eye cease.

Arise, crie in the night: in  
the beginning of the wat-  
ches powre out thine heart  
like water before the Lord.

*Lam. 2. 18, 19.* Give the  
Lord no rest untill hee re-  
turne in mercie and make  
up those branches, & heale  
those wounds which sinne  
hath made in thy poore  
soule. If thou canst get  
thy heart to bee kindly bro-  
ken, if thy soule can be tru-  
ly humbled, the Lord will  
make thee to heare joy and  
gladnesse, that thy broken  
bones may rejoyce, yea hee  
will restore into thee the  
joy of thy salvation, and

N 4      stablish

stablish thee with his free spirit, *Psal. 51. 8, 12.* for the LORD hath promised to dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and to give life to them that are of a contrite heart, *Esay 57. 15.* Godly sorrow is the prime and chiefe remedy to cure the soule of every spirituall malady. As in the body nature hath a faculty of expelling that which is noxious and hurtfull, as the lungs by coughing, the braines by sneezing, the stomacke by vomiting, so the soule by godly sorrow and repentance, evacuates such malignant humors as doe threaten the destruction there.

thereof. Therefore that counsell which the Lord gave to foule-sicke decaied *Ephesus*, I give to thee, Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent *Apoc.* 2. 5.

Secondly, thou must judge and condemne thy selfe for thy sins. This was a meanes of bringing that gracelesse prodigall into grace againe with his father. I have sinned against heaven & before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy sonne, *Luke* 15. 21. If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged, *1 Cor.* 11. 31. This is a work wherein our vile hearts take small content (for what pleasure hath any banck-

rupt in casting up his accounts, or in reviewing his bookes?) and the Divell, if it bee, possible will hold us chat about something else, or else perswade us that it will bee a fruitlesse worke to judge our selves, but the more averse and indisposed wee are unto this duty of judging our selves, the more ready and busie wee shall see Satan to let and hinder us from it, the more eagerly should wee enforce our selves unto it. Therefore judge thy selfe and bee revenged upon thy selfe, by curbing of thy flesh & abridging thy selfe even of lawfull liberties; condemne thy selfe speedily, chat God & thy conscience  
condemne



condemne thee not eternally.

Thirdly bee instant, and earnest with the Lord in prayer, cry mightily unto God, cry as it were out of the belly of hell, as did *Ienas* 2. 2. Offer up prayers with strong crying & teares unto him that is able to save thee from death, *Hebr.* 5. 7. Intreate the Lord to repayre once more that blessed image of his which is now defaced in thee: Pray in faith, & urge the Lord with his promise, who hath said he will receive such sinners as returne unto him, and chāge the hue of their bloudy sins, which though they were as crimson they shall bee made as whit as snow: though

though they were red like scarlet they shal be as wool, *Esa. 1. 18.* Ply the Lord at the throne of grace, give him no rest, be importunate with him untill hee hath heard thy request, & fulfilled the desire of thy soule, which (as you shall heare in the second use of the doctrine) the Lord hath promised, and will most certainly performe unto all his.

Fourthly and lastly, renew thy covenant & vowes with the Lord; enter into a new league with him, bind thy selfe to a conscionable walking before him in all holy duties, carry a strait hand, and a watchfull eye over thine owne heart; lest that it start aside  
before

before thou beware of it; or Satan (who will never leave soliciting thee unto evill) take thee at some advantage, and so prevaile with thee againe to stoope to his lure.

This is the course which must bee taken, if ever thou wouldst recover thy losse: which course though it bee painfull, yet seeing it will prove gainfull and profitable, let it bee speedily set upon: What paines would we not indure for the safety of our bodies? Incisions, scarings; yea, cutting off of a member gangren'd rather than hazard the whole bodie: shall we indure thus much for the good of our bodies, and not much more take

take up the practice of those things, that tend to the salvation of our soules. Some say, a bone being broken and well set againe, is stronger than it was before; it so falls out sometimes with grace in the hearts of Gods children: after their falling, they have beene more confirmed, as was *Peter*, they have walked more humbly, more watchfully, more closely, and more thankfully all the dayes of their life after, the Lord in great mercie working good out of their evill: But let no man dare to tempt the Lord in hope of such a recovery, lest the Lord leave him, & so he fall into that fearefull plight we before spake of.

Con-

Consider therefore, my brethren, I beseech you, seriously of these things, that so you may (by the grace of God) bee the better able to prevent declining, or being fallen, may remember from whence yee are fallen, and repent, and doe your first works.

Apoc. 2. 5.

Thus having acquainted you with the differences betwixt true and counterfeit grace: having laid downe the evidences of true grace; and thirdly, having shewed the reasons why grace is of that excellencie and worth above all the world: I now come to the fourth and last thing which I propounded, and that is to make some use & appli.

*Vse. I.*

application of the point.

Is it so, that it hath beene proved, that grace is the best thing wee can partake of? Then lamentable is the blindnesse, and pitifull is the ignorance of the greatest part of the world, who neither see their ~~want~~ want, nor yet the worth of grace. How many bee there who place all happinesse in these outward things, riches, honours, pleasures, &c? Taking those to bee the onely happy men, whose bellies the Lord fills with earthly treasures. O, he is a happy man (say they,) hee cannot doe amisse, hee hath the world at will. These are such as live by sense, whose hearts goe after their eyes, as  
*Iob*

*Iob 31. 7.* These are such as  
minde earthly things, and  
therefore say, as *Psal. 4. 6.*  
*who will shew us any good?*

They encumber themselves  
with the things of this life,  
neglecting grace, the one-  
ly thing needfull; yea, that  
which is of absolute neces-  
sity unto salvation. Is it not  
a thing much to be lament-  
ed, that in this glorious  
noone-tide of the Gospell,  
people should so dote up-  
on the world, as if there  
were no other goodnesse  
under the Sunne, but to be  
great, to be honorable, to  
eat and drinke, to take their  
sports, and follow their  
pleasures and profits? If  
*Paul* in his dayes could not  
speake, nor write it with-  
out

out griefe and weeping, to consider how many went a madding after the world, minding earthly things; surely if hee lived in these our times, his heart would not aske, but breake, to see how eager people are upon the world, how little grace is respected & looked after, no more than the refuse and parings of our nailes. Whereas, if a man had all the world, and want grace, hee hath in account nothing, but if hee want all outward things, and be indowed with grace, he hath enough, for grace is sufficient for him: yet, alas, as the Israelites were scattered up and downe Ægypt to gather stubble, and to picke



picke up strawes ; so the  
greatest part of the world  
hunt up and downe, beat  
their braines, use their wits  
and stretch their consci-  
ences for those things,  
which ( compared with  
grace ) are no better than  
straw or stubble. The  
condition of many people  
wold be a great deale more  
tolerable, ( if any tolerati-  
on may be of evill ) if their  
want of grace proceeded  
from meere ignorance of  
the price and worth, or  
the necessity of grace : but  
too many there bee who  
are destitute of grace, meer-  
ly through their neglect of  
the meanes of grace ; nay  
( which is worse ) from a  
gracelesse and wicked con-  
tempt

tempt of it, scoffing and  
scorning the practice of it,  
wheresoever they behold  
it. Where shall a man live,  
or whither shall hee goe,  
where hee shall not meete  
with some scoffing and flee-  
ting *Ismael*, or some scor-  
ning *Michol*, to flout the  
practice of piety, and tooth  
and naile to bring it into  
disgrace? If any amongst  
them be (like *Saul* amongst  
the people) higher in mat-  
ters of religion, or more  
forward in the practice of  
holinesse than themselves,  
how is hee maligned and  
contemned? Hee is hun-  
ched at (as *Ioseph* was a-  
mongst his brethren, who  
could not speake peaceably  
unto him) hee is hated of  
them.

Gen. 37. 4.

them, as *Iacob* was hated of *Eſau*, because his owne works were evill, and his brothers good. 1 *Ioh.* 3. 12. Had not our sweet Saviour foretold us of the iniquity of these last times, we might wonder that these dayes of the Gospel should bring forth such prodigious monsters as these are. Oh let us pitie then, and bewaile their gracelesse condition. I have read of one *Marcellus*, a Roman Captaine, who having taken *Syracusa*, and entred the City, teares fell from his cheekes to see so great a multitude of people, and so goodly a City to be captivated. Hath the outward and bodily misery of others, occasioned  
sorrow

2 Tim. 2. 25

sorrow in those that were heathens, yea, enemies; and shall not we that are Christians weepe and mourne to see so many soules, so many of our friends and acquaintance to be captivated of sin and Satan, to perish body and soule through the want of grace? Shew wee our true compassion, not onely in being affected with the misery and danger of gracelesse persons, but also in labouring to pull them out of the snares of the Devill, of whom they are captivated at his will. Of old, Gods people were enjoyned to bring home their neighbours, yea, their enemies Oxe or Ass, if they met them

them going astray, *Exod.* 23. 4. Will God have us to take care of Oxen and Asses and not (much more) to regard the soules of our brethren? *Let him know, that hee which convertis a sinner from going astray out of his way, shal save a soule from death and shall hide a multitude of sins, Lam. 5. 20.*

Againe, is grace the most excellent thing wee can attaine unto? Then let this set an edge upon our affections, let it be as a spur in our sides to make us mend our pace, and make more haste after grace. if you were perswaded of your happinesse in the possession thereof, if you were sensible of your misery in the  
want

*Vse. 2.*

want of it, as *Rachel* cryed unto her husband for children, *Gen. 30. 1. Give mee children, or else I die*; so thou wouldest cry out, Lord, give mee of thy grace, or else I die. I see how wretched and miserable I am wanting grace: Oh what shall I doe, that I may obtaine grace? Woldest thou have grace? Then be an humble and earnest suter at the throne of grace. Seek it aright, & thou shalt be sure to finde it. If thou knewest the gift of God (said Christ to the woman of Samaria) thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee water of life, *Ioh 4. 10.* which words doe plainly teach us, that all those

and yet never come to have his soule brething and panting after grace and goodnes; for he never comes to see (much lesse to loath & forsake) some bosome and darling sins; and so never know what this blessed hnnger and thirst meaneth. Great things must be greatly, and earnestly sought for, and desired. Thou must sigh deeply, aske earnestly; seek diligently, knock constantly, and wait patiently upon God in the use of his holy ordinances, before such an excellent thing as grace is will be obtained, or powred into such a filthie soule as thine is. *The Kingdome of Heaven suffereth violence, & the violent take it by force;*

*Mat. 11, 12.* Thou must  
feele thy soule emptie, and  
utterly destitute of grace, or  
else thou wilt never hunger  
nor thirst after it. What  
made that miserable pro-  
digall so desirous of huskes?  
Poverty pincht him, and  
hunger bit him. I die for  
hunger, *Luke 15. 17.* The  
person that is full, despiseth  
an hony combe: but unto  
the hungry soule every bit-  
ter thing is sweet, *Pro. 27. 7.*  
The full fed Isralite, loathed  
*Manna*, & quailles, but hun-  
gry *Lazarus* would have  
beene glad of crummes. He  
hath filled the hungry with  
good things, *Luk. 1. 53.* I  
dare boldly say that there  
was never any poore,  
hungry, and humble sinner  
(groning



(growning under the weight and burthen of his finnes, and growing weary of his old courses) which did truly and seriously set himselfe to seeke for grace, either repented him of his paines or lost his labour. Ye shall seeke me and shall find me, because ye seek me with all your heart, *Ier.* 29. 12, 13. The Lord is neerer unto all that call upon him : yea to all that call upon him in truth, *Psal.* 145. 18. Encline your eares and come unto me, and your soule shall live, *Esay* 55. 3. Many (as it was said unto *Baruch*) seeke for themselves great things, *Ier.* 45. 5. Many have deepe plots and great projects for these outward things;

things; and the Lord doth not only crosse, but (oft times) curse their devices, and projects, so as their designs come to nought, and perish as doth the untimely fruit of a woman. But never was there one or other which did seriously and in sincerity seek for grace, but had good speed, & the desire of his heart satisfied, the Lord in his due time graciously did answer him. He will fulfill the desire of them that feare him: he also will heare their cry, and will save them, *Psal. 145. 19.* Let us then go boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and finde grace to helpe in time of need, *Hebr. 4. 16.*  
Be

Be intreated therefore to throw downe thy selfe before the throne of grace ; confesse thy sinnes unto the God of Grace ; intreat his Majestie to pitie the poore confounded worke of his owne hands , by the malice of Satan and the poison of sinne most wofully defiled. Beseech him for his Christs sake , to breath into thy empty soule some blast of grace , to fill thy empty, barren , and gracelesse heart with the fruits of his Spirit. This earnest desire of thine will bee a good evidenceto thy soule of some good comming towards thee, of some seed of grace already sown in thee, it being an effect of grace to

bewaile the want of grace ,  
and to bee earnest with the  
Lord for a supply thereof.  
If thou wert in any bodily  
want or necessity , Towne  
and Countrey (peradventu-  
re) should heare if not  
ring of it. Thou canst hear-  
tily pray for , and earnestly  
seeke out for outward ne-  
cessaries , food , clothing ,  
fire , &c. But to whom dost  
thou make thy complaint  
of the want of grace ?  
Whereas grace being the  
most excellēt thing , should  
in the first place be desired  
for thy selfe , thy wife , thy  
husband , thy children , &c.  
If thou hast grace , thou  
hast gotten a rich portion ,  
a great possession , thy line  
is false in a faire ground. If  
thou

thou seest grace wrought in the hearts of thy children, thou mayest be freed from carefulnesse, or seeking great things for them; they have a great, a rich portion. The Heathen could say that, *Vertue was a sufficient Dowrie*. And the Scripture saith, *The Lord will not famish the soule of the righteous*. Labour not then for the meat which perisheth, but labour for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, *Ioh. 6. 27*. Grace is meat that endureth, and bringeth us (as we have heard) unto everlasting life. Naturally we affect, and covet such things as are lasting, but when we conceive them to be both

O 5      lasting

Prov. 10. 3.

lasting and good, then we prize them at an higher rate & set more by them. Oh let those properties then enhance the price of grace, and let us labour more for it than for all the riches, and treasures of the world, seeing they are but dung in comparison of grace, as may easily appeare unto you.

For first, grace may procure, and fetch in riches and outward things, as our Saviour hath said. Seeke yee first the Kingdome of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ministred unto you, *Mat.* 6. 33. Riches, and treasures shall bee in the house of the righteous, *Psal.* 112. 3. I may say of grace, as *Salom*

*men* doth of wisedome, *Pro.*  
3. 16, 17. Length of dayes  
is in her right hand, and in  
her left riches, and glory.  
Her wayes are wayes of  
plesure, and all her paths  
prosperity; whereas all the  
honours and riches of the  
world cannot purchase or  
procure one drame of grace:  
this is a supernaturall work,  
and gift of G O D freely  
bestowed upon his deare  
ones.

Besides it is grace which  
gives a well being to riches,  
honours, and all outward  
things; without grace these  
are unsanctified unto us,  
they are occasions of much  
evill; God is highly disho  
noured, and man much hurt  
by them. To the wicked,  
thei

Jer. 22. 21.

their table is a snare before them, and their prosperitie their ruine, *Psal. 69. 22.* Prosperitie and abundance (without grace) makes men proud, and causeth them to be adder-eared at the voice of God: I spake unto thee when thou wast in prosperity, but thou saidest I will not heare: whereas the more grace wee have, the more humble wee are, and more willing to heare and ready to obey whatsoever God shall speake unto us.

Thirdly, if it were possible for a man to bee possessed of all the riches and honors of the world, these may make him great, and glorious in the eyes of men, but he shall be never a whit the more



more esteemed of God for them. He accepteth not the persons of princes, and regardeth not the rich more than the poore, for they bee all the workes of his hands, *Iob* 34. 19. Whereas grace maketh us lovely, and honourable in the Lords eye, yea, a deere, and precious unto him. As we finde in *Esa.* 44. 4. Thou wast precious in my sight, and wast honorable, and I loved thee.

Fourthly, riches will not availe us in the evill day: they cannot defend us from any blow the Lord intended to give us. If God will smite us, no outward things can shelter or defend us. Neither their silver nor their gold shall bee able to deliver

deliver them in the day of the Lords wrath, *Zeph. 1. 18.* whereas grace is as a shield, and helmet. Put on the brestplate of faith and love, and the hope of salvation for an helmet, *1 Thess. 5. 8.* The Lord will blesse the righteous, and with favour will compasse him as with a shield, *Psal. 5. 12.* Righteousnesse preserveth the upright, *Pro. 13. 6.*

Fiftly, and lastly, suppose a man after long travell, and sore labour hath gotten unto himselfe abundance of these outward things, large and great possessions; and what hath he gotten? even clay, winde, vanity, yea nothing. For so the wise man calleth riches, *Prov. 23. 5.* Whereas

Wheras he that hath obtained grace, hath got durable riches, that which will stand by him and help him, when all outward worldly things will faile him. Therefore above all things in the world labour, and lay about for grace, seeing the best things of the world are not to be compared with it.

But how hard a thing is it for a minister of Christ to beat this into the heads of people, especially the poorer sort, who most neglect grace? and therefore they can rise early, lye downe late, and eate the bread of carefulnesse; they can call and crie for these outward things for themselves and theirs; but how  
few

few will stirre one foot, or wet a finger for the obtaining of grace? How many poore soules never had any one thought tending that way? not so much as once dreame of the necessity of grace, and therefore trouble not themselves about it? Let all such beware, lest as a Captaine (who finding one of his watchmen, which kept sentinell, asleepe) cut off his head, saying, Dead I found thee, and dead I leave thee: so the Lord cut of these with the sword of his wrath and vengeance, leaving them for ever dead in sinne, as he found them. Be intreated therefore, I doe more earnestly beseech you  
speedily

speedily to seeke out for grace. There is a time when grace may bee had, but if that time be let slippe, there will come a time wherein wee shall call for grace but shall not have it, seeke for grace, but shall not finde it, *Prov. 1. 28.* The offer of grace ends, with us when our life ends, and that may be (for ought thou knowest) this night before to morow comes. Learne wisdom of the men of the world, who will bee sure to take their time, they will make hay whiles the sunne shines: were the grace of God in our owne power or disposing, wee might (as many rich men doe, eate, when we have a stomacke, when,

when our appetite serves :  
but we are poore in this re-  
spect, and live upon almes,  
and therefore should be af-  
fected as poore people are ,  
who are no sooner called to  
receive an almes , but are  
ready and runne with hand  
stretched out to receive it.  
Oh beware of trifling out  
the season of grace. To day,  
even whiles it is called to  
day, seeke out for grace. *Be-  
hold, now is the accepted time,  
even now is the day of salvari-  
on* , 2 Cor. 6. 2. God is I  
am : *To day, if you will heare  
his voice , harden not your  
hearts , Hebr. 3. 7, 8.* Put  
not off untill to morrow.  
If thou beest not fit to day  
thou maist be more unfit to  
morrow , yee cannot tell  
what

what shall be to morrow,  
*Iam. 4. 14.* It may be thou  
shalt never see the morrow,  
as it fell out with *Archias*,  
who receiving a letter  
which advertised him of  
present danger, would not  
so farre interrupt his drin-  
king as to take up time to  
reade it, but resolved to read  
it to morrow; and what fol-  
lowed? hee was that night  
slaine at the banquet. Wee  
see delayes are very dange-  
rous. Be wise therefore for  
thy poore soule as *David*  
was, who made haste and de-  
layed not, *Psal. 119. 60.* Say  
not as did *Felix* when hee  
heard *Paul*; Goe thy way for  
this present, and when I have  
a convenient time I will call  
for thee, *Act. 24. 26.* It is  
just

just with God thou shouldest misse of that time which thou proposhest unto thy selfe, if thou wilt not lay hold of that season which the Lord doth offer unto thee. There be some which profanely say, young Saints may prove old devils, but I dare boldly say, old devils seldome or never prove young Saints, he that hath contemned grace forty fifty or sixty yeres, very rarely, very hardly attaines unto it afterward. *Remember now thy Creator in the daies of thy youth, whiles the evill dayes come not, Eccles. 12. 1.* wilt thou spend the flower of thy dayes, the strength of thy youth in the lusts of the flesh, the service  
of



of the world, and the bondage of the devill, and hope to finde the grace in thine old worn days? Consider what Zophar saith, *Iob 20. 11. His bones are full of the sinne of his youth, and it shall lye downe with him in the dust.* It is true, that God can give grace at all times, even at the last, but let no man dare to tempt the Lord in neglecting the time of grace, which for ought thou knowest may bee this very instant. If now thou wilt open, when the Lord knocks he wil come in, & replenish thy soule with grace; but if thou wilt now give him the repulse, it may be, thou shalt never have offer more. What doest thou think it is  
now

now too soone ? thou wilt say hereafter, it is too late, the time is past. Consider what the Lord speakes by his prophet. *Thou remainest in thy filthinesse, and wickednesse : because I would have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged, till I have caused my wrath to light upon thee, Eze. 24. 13.* Suffer not the time of grace to passe over thee to thy confusion. Take heed lest the neglect, and contempt of grace doe hereafter wound thy soule, and sting thy conscience, when it will be too late for thee to seeke and cry for grace, the date of grace and mercy being out with thee. That this which I have spoken may take

take the better effect and deeper impression in thy heart, know, that Thou art a vile and odious creature in the Lords eye, untill such time as his image bee renewed in thee; untill the worke of grace be wrought in thee, thou art more loathsome to God than a toad is to thee. Thy person, thy thoughts, thy words, thy deeds, nay thy service which thou performest unto the Lord, he hates, and abhors; *for the way of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, Pro. 15. 9. So is his sacrifice, ver. 8. so are his thoughts, ver. 26.*

Besides thou art not only a slave to sinne, but thou art under the vassalage and bondage of the devill; *for*  
he

*he is the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, 1oh 2.2. untill such time as grace bee wrought in thee, untill thou bee brought to amendment of life, thou art in the snare of the devil and art taken of him at his will, 2 Tim. 2.26. To be a slave to sinne and Satan is a most wofull and miserable slavery, worse than to be a gally slave under the Turkes; for they that are gally slaves know their misery, mourne for it, and would gladly come out of it: whereas those that are in this spirituall bondage under sin and Satan see it not, feel it not, and therefore neither grieve for it, nor yet desire to be brought out of it.*

*Grow*

it. Againe, thou art every day in danger of some judgment, thou art under the wrath of God, and therefore livest in continual danger of one stroke or other, yea of death, yea of hell and damnation, *for evil pursueth sinners, Proverbs 13. 21.* Bee not therefore so blinde, and sottish as to conclude of future safety by thy present security. Wilt thou feare no danger, because thou feelest no judgement? I tell thee thou lyeest under a most heavy and fearefull judgement, in that thou art insensible of thy danger, and wilt not be perswaded of thy misery. To bee given up to blindness of mind, and hardnes of heart

P

is

is a soule-killing judgment, of all other most fearefull. Consider of these things, and the Lord give thee understanding, that so thou mayest be thoroughly perswaded of thy naturall misery, which thou must bee, before ever thou wilt hunger and thirst after grace, before ever thou wilt call and cry unto GOD for grace.

*Use 3.*

Thirdly, if *Grace* bee the most excellent thing, why should we not labour and strive to grow in grace, as we are exhorted, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. An honest and good heart is never weary of increasing its stocke of grace, as worldlings are unwearyed in heaping up transito-

ry riches, and lading themselves with clay, though sometimes it fals out, that outward things have their satiety, and wee may bee cloyed with them, whereas in grace their is no nimity, a mans heart cannot bee cloyed, nor clogg'd with it. Our life is a wayfare, a walke, no time of standing, we must still forwards on, and on, as those that have a great journey to goe. As the Lord said to *Elias* when hee found him sitting and sleeping under a Iuniper tree, *Up and eate, thou hast a great journey to goe*, 1 King 19. 7. So wee have a long way, and a short day to finish it; and therefore had need bestirre our

1 Thes. 4. 1

Ezek. 47.

3, 4.

selves to purpose: Therefore as *Paul* said to the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thess.* 4. 1. to I to you: Now I beseech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord *Iesus*, that ye increase more and more. Grace in the heart of Gods child, should bee like the waters flowing from the Sanctuarie *Ezek.* 47. 3, 4. which were at the first to the ankles, and after to the knees, and so to the loynes, and at last to a great deepe that could not be passed over. Though grace bee low and shallow at the first in us, we should so nourish and cherish it, that it may grow to ripenesse, and full of holinesse in the feare of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. Which that wee may the better



better doe, observe these directions: First, we must be carefull to remove away all evil hindring grace; and secondly, set upon the practice of that good which will further it.

First of all, we must be carefull to plucke up root and rinde of all such weeds as may over grow, choak, and hinder the prospering of grace. One mane and ranke weed is spirituall pride and selfe conceitednesse; which growes too fast in the best soile, being watered and cherished by the Devill; who when he cannot procure the childe of God to stoope to his lure, and bite at his bait of impiety and profanenesse,

Take away evill things.

2 Pet. 5. 5.

then labours hee to poison him with his owne venome, to puffe him up and make him swell with pride of his gifts. He will make him proud of his knowledge, proud of his preaching praying, &c. yea, (rather than faile) hee will make him proud of his humility, proud that he is not proud. Plucke up this weed therefore, for it much hinders grace. *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Hee fills the hungry with good things, and sends away the full empty, Luk. 1. 53.* Humble your selves therefore, and the Lord will exalt you. The more humble and lowly thou art, the freer thou art from shaking

king and over-turning; for wee see how houses stand fast, when many loftie and high buildings are blowne downe and fall. The higher any hill or mountaine is, the more barren it is, for the dew and raine which waters the earth, to make it fruitfull, carries not upon high hils, but falls downe into the valleyes, and makes them fruitfull; even so the meanes of grace lighting upon an high and lofty spirit, do fall from him, without soaking or entring into him, whereas lighting upon the humble and lowly, they make him fertile, for *the humble bee will teach his way, Psal. 25. 9.*

*Psal. 25. 9.*

Another weede which

P 4.

must

Psal. 30.6.

must be pluckt up, is selfe-confidence, or security. When Christians begin to beare themselves up on their owne strength, and to grow presumptuous, the Lord oft withdrawes from them the strength of his grace, as hee tooke off the chariot wheels of *Pharaoh*, and then downe they fall. *David* was too selfe-confident, when hee said, *I shall never bee moved*: therefore God soone hides away his face, and *David* was as quickly troubled. But of all other examples there is none for our purpose more remarkable than that of *Peter*, who took it in faule scorne to be thought to be such a dastard and white livered souldier, yea,

yea, such a false-hearted servant, as to forsake his Lord & Master in greatest extremity; and therefore (if you will take his word) hee will never flinch, he will die for Christ, before hee will deny him. But (when Christ fore-told his Apostles of their flinching from him) if *Peter* had thus replied, Lord, it may bee thou see'st more into mee, and know'st my heart better than I know my selfe; wee are of our selves weake and fraile, ready to pull in our heads upon every storme; but Lord, the spirit is willing, though the flesh bee fraile; of our selves we can do nothing any further than thou wilt assist us; strengthen us

therefore with thy grace,  
and then we will never flie  
from thee. If thus *Peter* had  
answered Christ, all had  
been well; but being foole-  
hardy, and selfe-confident,  
the Lord sets him upon his  
owne legs, leaves him unto  
himselſe; and what became  
of this boaster? at the word  
of a Maiden he denyes and  
forſweares Christ, curses  
and damnes himſelſe if ever  
hee knew him. Thus when  
Gods children grow care-  
leſſe, too confident, or are  
over-taken with a dead  
ſleep of carnall ſecurity,  
the Lord oft ſtands by, lets  
Satan looſe, and layes the  
reines upon their owne  
necks, whereby they come  
oft-times to bee over-taken  
with

with grosse and shamefull  
 sins; the Lord in wisdom  
 using (as bodily Physicians  
 oft doe) desperate medi-  
 cines and remedies, for the  
 curing of some desperate  
 disease prevailing in them,  
 or growing upon them.  
 Again, there is another  
 weed to be plucked up, and  
 that is *Insincerity*, if I may  
 so call it; the want of truth  
 and uprightnesse of heart:  
 call it *Hypocrisie*, if you will,  
 that stinking weed, which  
 like the wilde Gourd, sow-  
 red all the Pottage, 2 King.  
 4. 40. The Lord loveth  
 truth in the inward parts,  
 and loathes the contrary.  
 Uprightnesse and sincerity  
 helps forward the worke  
 of grace, as appeares, *Psalm*

2 King 4.  
 40.

84. 11. *The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walke uprightly.*

The want of uprightnesse will make grace to wither. It is not possible for that tree to stand long, which is rotten at the root, it may for a while seeme fresh and Greene, but as it takes no root downeward, so it will not (long) beare fruit upward, for when the wind begins to blow hard, downe it falls. Whereas a gracious heart (which truly delights in the Law of God, and meditates therein alone in the night, as well as openly in the day) *is like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that will bring forth her fruit*



*fruit in due season, whose lease shall not fade, but be greene, and never cease yeelding fruit.*

As these weeds must bee plucked out of the heart, or else grace cannot possibly thrive or prosper; so there be certaine briers & thornes which must be stubbed up, or else grace will quickly bee choked in us. These thornes are the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, which whiles some have lusted after, they erred from the faith, & pierced themselves thorow with many sorrowes.

Mat. 13. 22.

1 Tim. 6. 10.

These things, sayes Paul, 1 Tim. 6. 11. we must flye, and follow after righteousness, godlinesse, faith, &c. implying

implying that grace will not thrive, if love of money bee not rooted out of us. What choked grace (if any was) in *Dennis*, but the love of the world? Oh the multitude of soules that have miscarried, and for ought we know to the contrary, might have done well, if riches had not been; not that riches are the cause, but an occasion of their miscarrying! What parted Christ, & that hopefull young man in the Gospel? *Mat. 19.* was it not the love of riches? Many have begunne well in their youth, and given good hope, but in their age have growne cold, through the love of the world. If once  
mens

mens hearts begin to goe after their eyes, and to bee set upon the world, twenty to one but grace goes to decay in them; for the world will afford a man little time to exercise those things which hold up the life of grace; as prayer, reading, hearing, &c. If the world hath seized upon the heart, it fumes up into the head, and fills the braine, sleeping and waking with restlesse thoughts, which way to compasse businesse, contrive things and bring ends together, so as scarce once in the day a good thought comes to minde, but one occasion or other of the world stifles it, or shuffles it out, so as it comes  
to

Psal. 62.10.

to nothing. Therefore if riches increase, *set not your heart upon them*, Psal. 62.10. Use them as thornes for thy weale to stop a gap withall, to fence thee from outward harmes, or to warme thee, but lie not upon them, hold them not too hard, lest they strike into thee, and wound thee; remember alwayes, that they are thornes, good in their lawfull use, and when they are rightly husbanded, but otherwise noxious and hurtfull. They are thornes, they will over-grow and choak all good things that grow neere them, if they bee let alone.

Againe, there bee many bad humours, foolish and noysome

noysome lusts which must  
bee purged out of the heart,  
or else grace will never  
thrive nor prosper in it; to  
wit, envy, hatred, malice,  
guile, dissimulation, filthi-  
nesse, evill speakings, & the  
like, which corrupt good-  
nesse. Therefore *S. Peter*  
exhorting his brethren, to  
whom hee wrote, to em-  
brace the sincere milke of  
the Word, that they might  
grow therby, prepares them  
to this, by advising them to  
lay aside those base distem-  
pers, for they do much hin-  
der the growth of Grace:  
where they are, they take  
away the glory and beauty  
of a Christian, and make  
him unseemely in the eyes  
of his brethren, they dar-  
ken

Deut. 21.  
13.  
1 Pet. 2. 11.

ken his lustre, and doe blot  
and blemish his holy pro-  
fessiō. Therfore away with  
these, lay these aside, not as  
a man doth his apparell,  
with a resolution to take it  
up againe; but as the cap-  
tive maid, when shee was  
to be married, laid aside the  
garment of her captivity,  
*Deut. 21. 13.* with a reso-  
lution never more to put it  
on. *Abstaine from all fleshly  
lusts, for they fight against  
thy soule, 1 Pet. 2. 11.* As  
Easterne windes doe nippe  
herbs and flowers, and cold  
stormes doe hinder trees  
from growing: so fleshly  
lusts nip grace in the bud,  
as it were, and blast it in the  
bloome, that (if it dieth  
not, yet) it comes not for-  
ward

ward so fast as otherwise it would.

Last of all, take heed and beware of the needlesse and familiar society of gracelesse and godlesse persons; for they are the quench-coale, nay, the very bane and poyson of grace unto many. *He that is a companion of fooles; shall bee destroyed; or as Iunius hath it, He shall bee made worse, Prov. 13. 20.* God hath branded wicked persons for fooles, they are fooles in graine, as many appeare by diverse things.

First in that they make it their sport and pastime, to doe wickedly, which no wise man dares do, none but fooles will doe, *Pro. 10, 23.*

Second-

2

Secondly, in that they hate to bee reformed, and will not be beat out of their old wayes and courses, because they be such as do best affect, and please them; *The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise Pro. 12.15.*

3

Thirdly, in that they hate saving knowledge, and will not chuse the feare of the Lord. *A foole hath no delight in understanding, Pro. 18.2.*

4

Fourthly and lastly, in that they cast the Word of God behind them, and tread it underneath their feet. *Loe, they have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them! Ier. 8. 9. therefore come out from*



from amongst the, lest thou partake of their folly. They are pitch, if thou touch them, they will defile thee, There is a kinde of poyson and venome in the words & the society of the wicked which will fret, as the Apostle saies, like a Gangrene; and mens soules are more ready to take the contagion of sin, than their bodies are to take the infection of the plague. It would take up a long time, and prove a large discourse, to shew how many waies, and by what degrees mischief doth grow, by haunting wicked company. By often hearing filthy and obscene speeches, zeale in many is quenched, and such  
lan-

language growes in-offensive. By often seeing lewd pranks and wicked practices, men can looke on without dislike. Thus the societie of the wicked quells a mans hatred of their wicked courses, and so enchants him, that (if hee cast not in his lot amongst them yet) he hath no power to gain-say or reprove them. Therefore as you love your soules, loath the companie of the wicked. Can a man take fire into his bosome, & not burne? live amongst, or delight to be with the wicked, and not bee ungodly? Dost thou not know *that a little leaven will sowre the whole lump*? And as the old saying is, One scabbed sheepe

sheepe infects the whole flocke. Therefore say as David, *Away from mee ye wicked, I will keepe the Commandements of my God, Psal. 119. 115.* If thou wouldest have grace thrive in thee, *Bee a companion of those that feare God and keepe his precepts, Psal. 119. 63.* For evill men & deceivers grow worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. Now as these evils must be avoided, so (if you would grow in grace) good things must bee practised, as the meanest to procure health of body is first to purge out malignant humours, and then to take cordials, and to observe a good diet.

Therefore, first of all  
goe

*Psal. 119.  
115.*

*2. Tim. 3. 13*

Good  
things to  
be follow-  
ed.

goe thorow-stich with the  
worke of reformation, set  
not upon it by halfe, to re-  
forme; and amend in part,  
and leave some corrupti-  
ons untoucht, vnreformed,  
is very dangerous. Many  
christians after enlightning  
set only upon some grosse  
and capital enormities, and  
those (it may be) they have  
given a deadly wound, so as  
they shall never be able a-  
gaine to make head against  
their poore soules, but yet  
passe by the reformation of  
some smaller evils; which  
being let alone have at  
length growne strong e-  
nough to beate them from  
their holie profession. *If  
there bee not a cleansing of  
our selves from all filthinesse  
of*

of flesh and spirit, we shall never grow up unto holinesse in the feare of God, 2 Cor. 7. 1. If any sinne be favoured and spared, though it may sit downe, and be quiet for a while, yet at last by the helpe of the devill, and our owne vile hearts, it will breake out and so foile us, as we shall fowly blemish our holy profession, if not wholly fall from it. Rest not therefore in a partial reformation, Thou hast no assurance that thy foot standeth firme and sure in grace, untill all sinnes bee hatefull unto thee, and every evill way more or lesse reformed in thee. If thou dost not thoroughly reforme, thou wilt hardly

Q grew

grow in grace, yea hardly keepe from falling, whatsoever hopes thou mayest now give unto others of thy standing, and growing better.

Secondly, labour to keep thy heart soluble, bee every day abased at the sight of thy sinnes, and the sense of thy vilenesse and unworthinesse. The way for a man to get any good at GODS hand, is to acknowledge and bewaile his emptines, to grieve and mourne for his unworthinesse. God hath made a promise to fill the hungry with good things, *Apo. 21. 6. I will give to him that is athirst, of the well of the water of life freely, &c. I Pet. 5. 5. Hee giveth*

*Apo. 21. 6.*

*giveth grace to the humble.*

Humble your selves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you.

Thirdly, use the societie of Gods people, by whose example you may be encouraged to godlinesse, and by whose meanes you may be farthered in the way of happinesse. Fire-brands being laid together & blown, will increase their heat and light; so doth communitie and societie with those where the Word of God is kept on foot, by holy and Christian conference, increase the light of knowledge and the love of goodnesse in us. As there is a secret poyson, and bane in

the society of the wicked to corrup and infect; so there is a communicative, and a working power in the communion of Saints, both to continue, and to augment our stocke of grace. Little doe wee know or conceive how injurious we are unto our selves, how much wee hinder our growth in grace, by our shunning the society of the Godly, by our too much strangenessse with good Christians. The gaine which many have made of private conference, the good they have gotten by godly meetings, hath caused them to out-strip their brethren in many graces, and to exceed them by many degrees in holy duties. Therefore

as



as *Iuda* and *Israel* did aske  
the way to *Zion*, saying; Come  
and let us cleave to the Lord  
in a perpetuall covenant that  
shall not be broken, *Ier.* 50. 5.  
So let us inquire after good  
societie, and enter into a  
solemne league with good  
people, engaging ourselves  
one unto another that so  
we may mutually hold up,  
yea, and increase all good  
gifts and graces in us.

Fourthly, Be frequent in  
hearing and reading of the  
Word; the Word of God  
is the word of grace, which  
is able to build us up further,  
*Act.* 20. 32. Therefore,  
*1 Pet.* 2. 2. As new borne  
babes desire the sincere milke  
of the word, that you may  
grow thereby. If this Word

*Act.* 20-32.

be thy delight, it will make thee fruitfull, *Psal. 1. 2, 3.* Hence it is, that in *Esay 55. 10, 11.* the Word is compared unto raine, which watereth the earth, and makes it to bring forth, and bud, that it may give seed, &c.

Col. 1. 6.

The barrenesse of many soules proceeds from the want of the Word to make them fruitfull. *Paul* tels the *Colossians*, Chap. 1. 6. That they were fruitfull through the Gospel, from the day that they heard it, and truly knew the grace of God. The ministry of the Word is Gods holy ordinance, to beget and increase grace in his children, beating them off from the world, raising them up to a higher pitch of  
of

of heavenly-mindednesse,  
teaching them which way  
to prevent occasions of sin,  
and to beat backe the tenta-  
tions of the devill, &c.

Oh, pity then, pity those  
poore soules, which want  
these living waters, and this  
bread of Life. How many  
thousands in this our Eng-  
lish Israel perish for want  
of vision, the meanes of  
grace? What will become  
of all cruell soule-murthe-  
rers in the day of the Lord?  
Oh let us continually bow  
the knees of our hearts to  
the Father of spirits, that  
hee would put bowels of  
compassion into those that  
have authoritie, that the  
Church may bee purged of  
all unfavoury salt, and a

Q 4 supply

Prov. 9. 3.

4. 5.

supply made of a faithfull Ministry, which might feelingly and tenderly respect the flocke of Christ, which hee hath purchased with his bloud: And let all such (as to whom Wisdome hath sent her maidens, calling them that are destitute of wisdom, to come and eat of her meate, and drinke of her wine, know that God looks for fruits of increase answerable to the meanes of grace bestowed upon them, lest they bee in the number of those which receive the grace of God in vaine, 2 Cor. 6. 1.

Fifthly, if thou desirest to increase thy stocke of grace, let thy grace on worke, let it not bee idle. *The diligent*

*diligent hand maketh rich, saith Salomon, Prov. 10. 4.*

Prov. 10. 4.

*And, in all labour there is abundance: Prov. 14. 13.*

Pro. 14. 13.

I dare boldly say it is in nothing more true, nay in nothing so true, as in the improvement of grace; use grace and have, yea, increase grace. That servant which used and improved his Masters *Talents*, gained by them, and increased them. Whereupon Christ inferred, *Mat. 25. 29. Vnto everyone that hath, it shall be given, & he shall have abundance.* Instruments and vessels, for want of use, doe (oft-times) grow worse, and unserviceable. Gifts and graces of the Spirit, are bettered by improving

Mat. 25. 29.

Q 5: them

them ; according to the common saying, Use makes perfect. Hence it is , that *1 Tim. 4. 15. Paul* adviseth him , *These things exercise, and give thy selfe unto them, that it may be seene how thou proficest.*

Sixthly , and last of all , bee earnest with the Lord in prayer , that hee would put a spirit of life & power into all those meanes used by thee , or bestowed upon thee , for the increase of grace. For *Paul* may plant , and *Apollos* may water , but *God* must give the increase , *1 Cor. 3. 6.* without his blessing all meanes are but naked and empty. He is the Author and perfecter of every good thing begunne in

in any. Hence it is that the Apostle prays for the *Phillipians* 1. 9. *that their love may abound more and more.*

And that the *Colossians* 1. 9. *may bee fulfilled with knowledge*, and verse 10. *fruitfull in all good workes*

Teaching us, that prayer is the onely helpe to obtaine increase of any good from GOD. For although the Lord will perfect the worke of his owne hands, and make good whatsoever hee hath promised unto his children, yet will hee have them suiters unto him for that good they desire to obtaine at his hands. As wee looke for this honour at our childrens hands; that they shall aske  
of

of us such thinges as they want, and we doe purpose to bestow upon them; so much more standeth it with our duty, and is agreeable to Gods right and soveraigntie over us, that we by prayer begge at his hands all good things which he hath purposed, and promised to bestow upon us. As doth notably appeare by these words, *Eze. 36. 36, 37. I the Lord have spoken it, and will doe it. I will yet for this bee sought of the house of Israel to performe it unto them.* If we aske not, we must not looke to receive any thing from God as a blessing. By prayer wee obtaine those good things from G O D, unto which we could never have attained



attained unto by art, industry, or any other helpe; as the favorits of Kings get more by begging then any other can doe by any other facultie. Besides, as by our frequent conversing with Godschildren, we doe not onely observe their temper, & disposition; but by little & little learne their phrase and manner of speech; yea, and grow into some neerer acquaintance with their gifts & graces, & have our hearts and affections more firmly united, and knit unto them: even so, by our daily conversing with God in prayer, wee grow better acquainted with the Lord, wee come better to know the language of his spirit, and

and so more to partake of the gifts and graces thereof, yea, wee shall feele and finde increase both of our love unto God, and of his love unto us.

Now because of the deceitfulnesse of our hearts, and the abundance of self-love, which abides in the best of Gods children, wee are too ready to flatter, and to thinke too well of our selves, taking oft-times mole-hils for mountaines; it will not bee amisse to make some privie search, whether wee finde any growth of grace in us, or whether it stand at a stay, or bee in declension. A shame it will be for all such as live under the meanes,  
upon

upon whom God doth daily bestow cost, watering them with heavenly dewes, if they thrive not. If grace bee true and not counterfeit, more or lesse, some way or other it will grow. For to say truth, it is onely the good heart that groweth and brings forth fruit: an evill heart may give some appearance, make some shew of growth, but growes not; like to an *Atrophe*, one whose meat doth him no good, he eats and drinckes, and it maybe, with a greedy appetite devours more than is fitting, yet battels not, but rather falls away; every day more meager and leane than other: This (as was touched before)

before) shewes there is no sound union betwixt Christ and such; that they are no true and lively members of Christs body: for then there would appeare some fruitfulnessse, *Ioh. 15. 5. Hee that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* Well then, seeing the Lord hath planted us amongst the rivers of waters, let us take a view of our growth and fruitfulnessse.

Signes of  
our growth  
in grace.

First, thou mayest know thou growest in grace, if thou growest more and more into a dislike of sinne, (as was said in the beginning) if thy wants & weaknesses doe worke in thee daily, deeper humiliation.

For

For as grace discovers corruption, so the more it growes (as a light that comes into a darke roome) the more it shoves us the filthinesse and odiousnesse thereof, and makes us more and more ashamed of it.

Secondly, thou mayest know thou growest in grace by thine appetite to Gods ordinances. Dost thou taste more and more sweetnesse in the Word? Is prayer more and more delightfull to thy soule? Dost thou receive more and more comfort by the Sacrament? Doth thy soule more and more delight to bee in the place where Gods honour dwelleth? And are the feet of those that bring glad tidings

dings of salvation more and more beautifull in thine eyes? Whence arise these fruits, but from that seed of grace sowne in thy soule? I tell thee for a truth, that if these fruits bee in thee, and thy affections to the means of grace, be more and more intire and hearty, thou needest no more doubt of the growth of grace in thy soule, than thou wouldest, or dost question the growth of thy body, when thou findest thy stomacke unto thy daily food fresh and quick, and the parts and members of thy body, every day more active and lively than other, and more strong and able unto their severall offices. For certainly it is only  
grace

grace which makes the ordinances of God alwayes sweet unto us. For to a gracelesse pallat they are for the most part unsavoury. What made *David* so much to long after Gods Sanctuary? It was the grace of his heart, which set an edge upon his affections, and made his soule (*even as the Hart brayeth for the rivers of waters*) to thirst after God, *Psa. 42. 1*. When grace growes, our love unto the meanes increaseth, *2 Cor. 10. 15*. We hope (saith *Paul*) when your faith shall increase, to be magnified by you.

*Psal. 42. 1.*

*2 Cor. 10. 15.*

Therefore consider whether thine appetite to Gods ordinances increaseth. Thou mayest

mayest know it by these notes.

*Pfal. 36. 8.*

First of all, if thou findest thy soule marvellously refreshed with them, *Pfal. 35. 8. They shall bee satisfied with the fatnesse of thy house, & thou shalt give them drink out of the rivers of thy pleasure.*

Secondly, if Gods ordinances doe raise thee up to an higher pitch of heavenly-mindednesse, and doe more and more beat off thine affections from the world, and marre thy taste of earthly things, through the abundance of sweetnesse which thou findest in holy duties.

*Object.*

But may not a gracelesse & wicked heart find sweetnesse



ness in Gods ordinances? *Ezekiel* had a pleasant voice in the eares of the wicked. Chap. 33. 32. So *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly. And the temporary beleever, who resembleth the stony ground, *heareth the word, and receiveth it with joy, Mat. 13. 20.* And *Heb. 6. 4.* Some that fall away may taste of the heavenly gift. And verse 5. taste of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. How then is the taste of the godly distinguished from taste of the wicked?

*Mat. 13. 20.*

The taste of the wicked proceeds only from tasting of the ordinances of God, not feeding upon them; whereas the taste of the godly

*Answ.*

godlie comes from feeding upon them. Now you know there is a great difference betwixt a Cookes tasting of meats, who dips but his finger in them, or toucheth them but with the tip of his tongue ; and his taste that eates of the meat, and takes it downe into his stomacke. A wicked man may taste of Gods Ordinances, but he eates them not, hee feedes not upon them, hee doth not digest them; they make no good bloud, no spirituall health or strength in him, hee quickly vomits them up againe, so as his soule thrives not by them; whereas the good heart receives the Word and thrives by it, *For hee brings forth*

*forth fruit with patience.*

Fourthly, if there be that excellency in Grace, this makes wonderfully for the comfort of all Gods children, in regard of many high favours and singular priviledges which they have a right unto. First of all, this may comfort them in and against all those tentations, whatsoever doe or may befall them, either in respect of their kind and nature, or in respect of their strength and measure. Every one feeleth most where and how his shooe doth pinch him; and therefore in the agonie of his soule cries out ( I know it to bee true. ) Never poore soule tempted as I am tempted, and speaks  
in

*Vse 4.*

1 Cor. 10.

13.

Heb. 5. 7.

in the language of the Church, Lam. 1. 12. Behold and see, if any sorrow bee like to my sorrow: for thy comfort consider what Paul speaks to the Corinthians, as weak and as foully defiled as thou hast been, 1 Cor. 10. 13. There hath no temptation taken you, but such as appertaineth to men, and God is faithfull, which wil not suffer you to bee tempted above that you be able, but wileven give the issue with the temptation, that you may be able to bear it. Christ praying, that if it were possible the cuppe might passe from him, offered up praiers and supplications with strong crying and teares unto him that was able to save him from death, and was also heard

*in that which he feared.* Hee was, and he was not heard; not heard, because not exempted from tasting of that bitter cup of his Passion: for therefore came he into the world, that hee might drinke thereof, as himselfe acknowledged; and yet heard, in that, strength and comfort was so abundantly ministred unto him, that by suffering he overcame. And therefore, as one that had experience of our infirmities, he hath taught us to pray. *leade us not into temptation, but deliver us from evill:* as if wee should say, howsoever ( holy Father ) thou hast determined to expose us for our triall, unto tentations, yet suffer us not

R

to

to be vanquished or overcome by any evill. Now we know, or at the least should know, that ( if wee pray in faith ) God alwaies heares us : if not to be preserved from the tentation, yet to be upheld and assisted with sufficiencie of grace to endure the tentation : so as either the power of it shall be weakened and abated, or else our strength to beare it so increased, that we shal by the helpe of his grace, be able to wade thorow and overcome it. For God knows our strength, and what our backes are able to beare, and therefore doth ballance and proportion the tentation to the strength of his children ; weakelings or young.

young-lings he will not over-load with such burthens as may breake their backs, or crush them to pieces; they shal have light tentations. Whereas his strong ones have strong trialls, yet no other than such as they shall manfully undergoe, without fainting under them, though not without the feeling of the smart of them. So that as they have just cause to crie out with *S. Paul*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* So also in experience of Gods gracious assistance, they have no lesse cause to breake forth into thankfulnessse, and to triumph with *Paul*, saying, *I*

R 2

thanke

*thanke my God through Iesus Christ, &c.* For is God the God of *Paul* only? Is his grace sufficiently onely for *Paul*, or some few other speciall beloved, indowed with supereminēt graces? is he not also our helpe, our strength, hee that yeelds sufficiency of grace to every poore sinner, that trusteth in his goodnesse; & beleeveeth in his promise? Surely yes; for the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, he also will heare their cry and will helpe them, *Psal.* 145. 18, 19.

Secondly, this may wonderfully comfort us against the outward crosse, as well as the inward temptation. The way to heaven  
(wee



(we know) is not strowed with rushes and violets, but beset with thorns; a rough, narrow and troublesome way, whereupon many of Gods children are disheartened, and are ready to faint under the crosse, when it lyes any thing heavie upon them. If these had eies to see, and hearts to consider of the excellency and sufficiency of grace, which makes us willing to undergoe whatsoever the Lord will lay upon us, well content with the Lords ordering and disposing of us; they would rejoyce in heaviness, and bee comforted against the crosse. It may be thou thinkest thy troubles are such, as thou shalt

I have  
made it  
plaine in  
my Cordi-  
all for the  
afflicted.

R 2

never

never be able to overcome, and therefore art ready even to faint under them, & give over in the plaine field. Oh but consider the excellency of grace, wherewith the Lord hath hitherto supported thee in thy afflictions! Hath not God said, *I will not faile thee, nor forsake thee?* Heb. 13. 5. Hath he not said, *My grace shall bee sufficient for thee?*

What though thou beest plunged into a gulse of sorrow through manifold afflictions which have befallen thee? so that for a season thou art in heavinesse through them; yet through the power of grace thou shalt be able to hold up thy head from sinking, yea to rejoyce

rejoyce in the end with joy  
unspeakable and glorious  
1 *Pet.* 1. 18. What though  
the devill swell and rage a-  
gainst thee? What though  
his wicked instruments doe  
combine and bandie them-  
selves against thee, seeking  
to spoile thee of all outward  
and inward comfort? What  
though thy neere and dea-  
rest friends doe now turne  
away their faces from thee,  
yea, hate and abhorre thee  
as an out-cast and alien?  
Let *Dauids* comfort bee  
thine, who being in great  
sorrow because of the rage  
of the people which inten-  
ded to stone him, comfort-  
ed himselfe in the Lord his  
God, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. So doe  
thou comfort thy selfe in

the grace of God. Hath he bestowed his love upon thee? Hath hee given thee of his grace? Though thy outward calamities bee never so many, never so great, though thine enemies bee never so mightie, never so powerfull, yet *stronger is hee that is in thee, than he that is in the world*, 1 Ioh. 4. 4. If God grace thee, what though all the world should cast the dung of reproch in thy face to disgrace thee? If hee love thee, his love is better than life, and he will keepe thee from taking infection or hurt, from the rage and malice of all the world that hate thee.

Last of all, the consideration of that which hath  
beene

beene spoken concerning the excellencie of Grace, may comfort thee against the dregs and reliques of corruption, and the remnants of the old man yet abiding in thee, which, it maybe, doe so perplex thy soule, and wound thy conscience, that thou groanest under this pressure, and criest out with *Paul*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee from the bodie of this death?* Know, thy condition is no other, no worse than the best of Gods children, who so long as they live in this earthly tabernacle, doe carry about them the remainder of sin, which will defile their best actions, oft ble-

Rom. 7. 24.

with their profession, yea,  
grieve Gods Holy Spirit  
and make their heavenly  
Father offended with them;  
yet comfort thy selfe, and  
bee assured, that though  
corruption may vex and  
molest thee, it shall never  
subdue, nor vanquish thee,  
because of the grace of  
God abiding in thee: *For  
sinne shall not have dominion  
over you: for yee are not un-  
der the Law, but under Grace,  
Rom. 6. 14.* It is a good  
signe there is life, where  
wounds do bleed & smart;  
the griefe of thy soule for  
sinne, argues the life of  
grace abiding in thee; for  
those that are dead in sins,  
feelee no smart, are not  
grieved with corruption.  
Sinne

Sinne is not ponderous in the heart and conscience of gracelesse persons; because it is in its proper element and place, where it is welcomed and entertained, where it lives and reignes. Therefore if at any time thou feelest (as which of Gods children feele not) a rebellious law in thy members, rebelling against the law of thy minde, and carrying thee into the practice of such evils as thou hatest, and hast vowed against, let not this perplex thy soule, as if grace had forsaken thee, because it is no better with thee; but collect thy spirits, call upon grace, and say, Where art thou, my friend, my guide, my

Rom:7:23.

my hope, my help? stand by me, & strengthē me against corruption, which is too strong for me; if thou helpe me not, I am undone. I tell thee for truth, (for I know what I say) to be true) that by the vertue and strength of grace, a poore distressed soule, cleaving to the ground, abhorring its selfe, and lying at the very brinke of despaire, ready to bee swallowed up of Death and Hell, consulting and resolving to try whether hell torments, or the hellish pangs of an afflicted conscience were more tolerable; I say, a poore soule in such a desperate condition, hath by the strength of grace beene brought backe  
from



from death to life, and as it were from hell to heaven, received new, or revived againe its old comfort, beene at defiance with sinne and Satan, challenged Hell and Death, and bid them doe their worst, saying, *Who shall separate mee from the loue of God? &c.* Therefore yeeld not either to thine owne corruptions, or Satans tentations, though they have got thee on the hip, & given thee the foile. Set speedily upon the repairing of græe, and making up those branches which sinne hath made in thy soule and conscience. A good husband, as hee hath a care to keepe his house wind-tite and water-tite, so

Rom. 8. 38.

so if through the violence of any storme or tempest, any thing be blown downe or rent, he speedily sets upon the repairing of it, lest, through negligence and delays, things grow worse & worse: even so deales every good man with his owne soule: if any thing be amisse, or out of order, hee lets not all run to ruine, but speedily sets upon the repairing & amending of that which is any way weakened in him.

Let us now grow towards a conclusion: *Is Grace the best thing, the chiefest good? &c.* Then let every soule that shares in this benefit, beare his part in a song of praise, and  
breake

breake forth in the Apostles words, *Thanks therefore be unto God for this unspeakable gift*, 2 Cor. 9. 15. It is unspeakeable both in respect of its owne worth, and our unworthinesse. Our unworthinesse doth greaten Gods grace bestowed upon us. To bestow grace upon well deserving people were but retribution: but to honour vile and base ones, as wee by nature are, is such mercy as cannot bee sufficiently praised of us. How should this knit our hearts unto our God, and set our tongues on work with continuall thanks for his rich grace bestowed upon our poore soules. It is observed by some that *David* is more frequent

frequent in his praises, than in his petitions. Hee doth often praise God when hee askes nothing of him: but seldome doth he begge that benefit, for which his soule is not raised up to an anticipation of thanks. Hee makes way for new favours, that doth thankfully acknowledge old. The Lord hath appointed thankfulnessse to bee as a refluxe of his blessings, whereby they are sweetned unto us, as waters are kept sweet by motion, flowing too and fro. His grace, and mercies are daily and hourly renewed unto us: Why not then our thanks so to him? Offer we therefore continually unto our gracious God  
this

this sweet smelling sacrifice  
of praise, and let it bee per-  
fumed with our sighes and  
groanes proceeding frō the  
sense of our unworthinesse.  
Let us bow our selves be-  
fore the Lord as *Mephibo-*  
*sheth* did to *David*, and say,  
*what is thy servant that thou*  
*shouldest looke upon such a*  
*dead dogge as I am?* 2 *Sam.*  
9. 8. That the Lord should  
cast an eye of pittie and  
compassion upon such out-  
casts as we are; me-thinkes  
it should make us with  
soule-ravisht affections, to  
be evermore praising of his  
great and glorious Name,  
who hath made us precious  
in his sight, and honourable  
bestowing his love upō us,  
*Esa.* 43. 4. Let us evermore  
acknow-

acknowledge his love with thankfulness; and the rather, because the LORD takes himselfe to bee both satisfied, and glorified by our thanks. *Hee that offereth praise shall glorifie mee, Psal. 50. 32.* Know that whatsoever God hath done, or intendeth to do for man, or to man, hath no proper end, but his owne glory. *Hee made all things for himselfe, Prov. 16. 4. Bring my sonnes and daughters every one whom I have created for my glory, Esa. 43. 6, 7.* It is true that God worketh many thinges to our glory; and that Christ in us may bee more glorious; but the proper end which GOD aimes at in all, is his owne glory

glory. Therefore whatsoe-  
ver wee are, let us bee it in  
God, and through God,  
and for God. Wee are the  
Lords workmanship; the  
grace we have, and the glo-  
ry wee expect, came, and  
will come from his free  
love, and therefore must be  
to the praise of the *glory of*  
*his Grace, Eph. 1. 6.* As all  
waters come from the sea,  
and thither againe returne,  
even so all our happinesse  
comming from this Ocean  
of Gods free grace, should  
by praying this rich grace  
bee resolved againe into it.  
But in this wee are too like  
the grave, & barren, which  
receiue much, but returne  
little or nothing. Our back-  
wardnesse unto this dutie,  
lieth

Deut. 26.

lyeth couched under that service which the Lord by the hand of *Moses*, enjoyned his people *Israel*: who when they were come into the land of *Canaan*, which the Lord would give them as an inheritance to possesse, should take of the first of all the fruits of the earth, and bring it to the Priest, who should set it downe before the Altar, and then they should say, *A Syrian was my father, &c.* vers. 5. This was to minde the *Israelites* of Gods love and bounty towards them, and of those thanks which hee lookes for backe againe from them.

One would thinke that the love-tokens of a friend, which we daily and houely  
looke



look upon, should occasion  
us thankfully to minde him  
from whom they came: but  
we are like to dull Asses,  
and therefore must bee stir-  
red up to good duties, es-  
pecially to this of thanks,  
as the *Israelites* were by that  
Ceremony and service of  
offering their firstlings con-  
tinually unto the Lord.

There is no Servant  
which (if he be not devoid  
of humanity) will not bee  
evermore magnifying and  
extolling the bounty & li-  
berality of his Lord and  
Master; yea the very earth  
which drinkes in the raine  
that comes upon it, *bringe:h  
forth herbes meete for him  
by whom it is dressed, Heb. 6  
7.* much more should wee  
returne

returne back unto the Lord  
this tribute of thanks, which  
he lookes for at our hands.  
They are not the children  
of grace which denie the  
Lord this quit rent. If the  
light of Gods grace shining  
upon others should cause  
us to glorifie God for them;  
how much more should his  
rich grace bestowed upon  
our selves provoke us unto  
thankfulnesse? Not that we  
should thinke it enough to  
put the Lord off with a few  
words of course, *Thanks be  
to God, &c.* God lookes for  
the workes of our hands, as  
well as the breath of our  
mouthes. Our thankfulnesse  
must be reall, as wel as ver-  
ball; the Lord calls for a wel  
ordered conversation and a  
holv

holy life, by way of retribution, *Psal. 50. 23.* This will please God better than the sacrifice of rammes; or the calves our lippes. They honour and please God best, that obey him most. If our hands doe not praise God as well as our tongues, our thanks are but familiarly, the Lord will not accept of them. To honour God with our mouthes, & dishonour him with our lives, is meere hypocrisie. Let the grace of God in our hearts appeare not onely by *the grace of our lips, Pro, 22.* but by the holinesse of our lives, and then shall we truely honour him who hath so highly honoured us, as to bestow the best thing the chiefest good, even

*Thankfull for grace.*

ven his rich grace upon us.

*Jud. 24, 25.*

*Now unto him that is able  
to keepe you, that you fal not,  
and to present you faultlesse  
before the presence of his glo-  
ry; that is, To God only wise,  
our Saviour, bee Glory, and  
Majestie, and Dominion, and  
Power, both now, and for ever  
Amen.*

*Finis*

FINIS.

*Finis*